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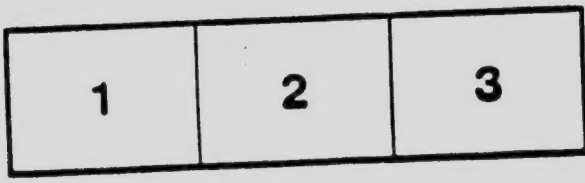


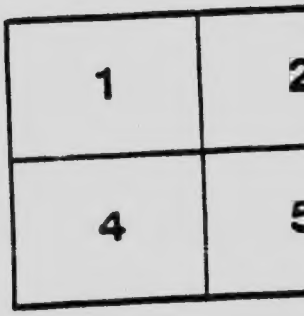

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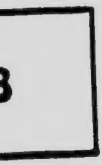


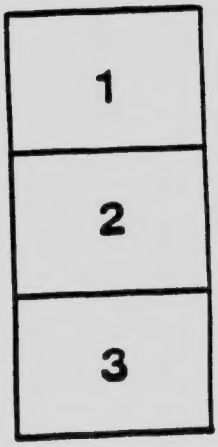


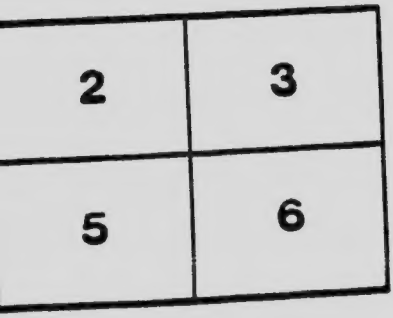

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# Egypt

A PLAY IN FOUR ACTS

BY

EDWARD SHELDON

FOTHERINGHAM & POPHAM
OTTAWA, CANADA

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SEPTEMBER, 1916

# :: Egypt ::

## Characters

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J. GORDON LINDSEY.
NICHOLAS VAN KLEET.
HARRY STREET, } His Ushers.
CLIP WIGGINS, }
GILES, Butler at "The Bungalow."
THE SHERIFF.
MRS. STURGES.
MARY BELLAMY, }
ANITA STURGES, } Miss Lindsey's Bridesmaids.
ROSIE GREEN, }
LOUISE, her Maid.
A HOUSEMAID at "The Crossways."

GYPSIES.

OLD FARO BLACK.
YOUNG FARO, his son.
LITTLE FARO.
TAWNY CHAL.
PERCIVAL SMITH.
LUCRETIA SMITH, his wife.
SOPHIA, } Their children.
CASPAR, }
OLD MRS. KOMELIO.
EGYPT KOMELIO, her Great-granddaughter.

Gypsy men and women.

THE FIRST ACT.

Red Pine Gap. The twilight of a night in spring.

THE SECOND ACT.

*(Four years later.)*

"The Bungalow." Miss Lindsey's wedding day.

THE THIRD ACT.

*(That night.)*

Mrs. Van Kleet's bedroom at "The Crossways."

THE FOURTH ACT.

*(Six years later.)*

The open road.

PLACE—Near Aiken, Georgia, and, for the last act, somewhere in New York State.

TIME—Now.

# Act 1

## SCENE.

Red Pine Gap—a natural hollow in a forest of Norway Pines. To back is a steep rocky declivity, covered with matted pine-needles, the rocks breaking through. Above this can be seen the trunks of great trees,—stretching far up before the branches begin—and through them, far away, the red glow of a fiery sunset. To right and left—in the hollow are also huge, straight trunks—one especially large one at left-front. In the shadow of the rocks at back is a great campfire—at present a glowing mass of coals. Hanging over it, by means of a bar resting on two rudely-formed supports, are several steaming kettles. Other dishes of battered tin are being cooked on stones, around the edges of the fire. Supper is being made ready. At left—half off and half on the stage—are two gypsy wagons, canvas-topped and showing the traces of brightly painted decorations. The horses have been unharnessed. At extreme right is an old, soiled tent; also the entrances to two others. Before the tents and beneath the big tree are stretched red blankets, buffalo robes, etc. Various garments are hanging over boxes, a heavily laden clothes-line is drawn between two pine trees, etc. Other indications of the roving, out-door life. During the act, the ruddy twilight glow deepens and fades away into night. Stars and a sickle moon appear through the tree-trunks at back. The gypsies light pine torches and nail them to the trunks of the trees; occasionally they throw wood on the fire and it bursts into flames.

## AT RISE.

The stage is occupied by quite a number of GYPSIES,—men, women and children. TWO MEN are bending over a tinker's wheel—left front—sharpening knives, a third sits near them on the ground mending a tin saucepan with a small plumber's blow-pipe. To right-front before the tents, are several very ragged and unkempt children playing a sort of hop-scotch game, calling and wrangling among themselves. To right centre is a group of three men, sitting on the ground and playing poker, as they smoke their black pipes. About the fire are the women and young girls, stirring the stews, cutting bread, cooking—generally

busy with the evening meal. One woman sits quietly leaning against a rock at back, nursing her baby. Under the huge pine tree—left centre—sits huddled old MRS. KOMELLO, quite to herself. On the step of one of the wagons, there rests an old man playing a concertina—a young man stands by him, leaning against the side of the wagon as he fiddles. Together they are wandering through some ancient Romany melody. Before them, listening to the music, are two young girls, sitting on the ground, weaving baskets. All the gypsies are dressed in semi-barbaric costumes, corduroys, red and yellow scarfs, flannel shirts, slouch hats for the men; brilliant colors for the women. They all wear large hoop-earrings of gold and silver and brass, many have rings, chains, etc. They have swarthy skins, magnificent eyes and teeth, superb freedom and ease of movement and carriage.

For several moments after the act begins there is a purely atmospheric feeling obtained by some slight expression from each separate group. It is to be played quickly, yet distinctly—with an orchestra-like effect.

THE FIDDLER—*(Finishing his song.)*

"And so till then, wherever I am,
I'll love my Romany chi!"

STELLA—*(Singing to herself)*—"I'll love my Romany chi!"—An old liar wrote *that* song! Here, give me another bundle—mine's too dry.

1t TINKER—*(To his companion)*—Pour on more water. This knife is dull as your head.

d TINKER—*(Obeying him)*—My old woman used it to cut wood. I told her if she did—I'd——

1st TINKER—*(Scornfully)*—You! You're afraid to teach her with a whip! *That's* how they learn, brother!

CASPER—*(One of the children)*—Stop it! You're jumping on my feet!

ALICE—It's Sophy's turn! Go on, Sophy!

SOPHIA—*(In a monotonous sing-song, as she hops about.)*

Can you jas te stariben,
Can you lel a kosht,
Can you besh undr' a bor,
Can you hel the bosh?
Said the Romany chi
To the Romany rye—
Said the——

CASPER—*(Interrupting)*—Oh—oh! You cheat! You stepped outside!

LUCRETIA SMITH—*(A stout, handsome gypsy matron, calling to them from the fire)*—Be still, you dirty brats! If you want a bite to eat!—*(To another woman)*—Set on the kettle for the tea. Lord love us—it's almost eight o'clock.

MRS. KEERGOR—Old Faro and his son are still away. Can we eat without the chief?

TAWNY CHAL—*(One of the poker-players, with a laugh)*—Three kings! This is my lucky day! *(He rakes in his winnings.)*

PERCIVAL SMITH—*(Admiringly, yet maliciously)*—You have a liar's face. God has been good to you, Tawny Chal.

TAWNY CHAL—*(Shuffling and dealing again)*—I wear a charm the black witch-doctor sold me.

JOE KEERGOR—What is it, brother?

TAWNY CHAL—*(Grinning)*—I may not tell. So—play. *(They look at their hands and fall into silence.)*

STELLA—*(Who is basket-making, as the fiddler pauses)*—Your new fiddle is much sweeter than the old one!

THE FIDDLER—It's not so bad—that's true. But I bought it with my gray mare, and *she* was worth a hundred dollars.

ANNIE—Lord! You can steal another worth two hundred.

LUCRETIA—*(Tasting)*—The stew is done. *(To the other woman, who is looking at Mrs. Komello curiously.)* What are you gaping at?

MRS. KEERGOR—*(Turning)*—Old Mrs. Komello. I think she is talking to devils.

LUCRETIA—She *is* a devil—she and her great-grandchild, too.

MRS. KEERGOR—Egypt? But she pens dukkerin so well. She'll swear to some young gorgio man that twenty girls are sick of love for him, and then he'll grin and give her as much as two dollars. I know, for I've seen them do it.

LUCRETIA—*(Who has crossed, during this last, to where Mrs. Komello is sitting under the great pine tree)*—Mrs. Komello! *(A pause.)* Mrs. Komello, where is your serpent descendant? *(Pause.)* I said where is Egypt?

She has been gone three hours. *(Maliciously.)* I think she has run off with a gorgio—stable-boy!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Suddenly, without looking around)*—Fat bag of lies—go back to your frying and stewing. It's all you're good for. *(She is the oldest woman in the tribe—an ancient crone—bent double and walking with the help of a stick. Her white hair hangs in wisps about her skinny, yellow face. She is smoking a short clay pipe—and mumbles to herself a good deal. Every now and then she stops to whittle off some shavings from a plug of tobacco and stuff them in her pipe.)*

LUCRETIA—Lord! You shoot fire like the Devil's cat! What's the matter with you to-day, Mrs. Komello?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(In her cracked, old voice)*—This is a bad place. I can smell Death here, hiding behind the tree-trunks ready to fly out like a big soft bat when the woods are dark.

LUCRETIA—But we came here years ago—and nothing happened.

MRS. KOMELLO—You have the brain of a cow and cannot understand. There is a rich gorgio who lives beyond the cross-roads to the south. He was a young man when a Romany chi found him on the road where his horse had thrown him——

LUCRETIA—*(Bored)*—Lord! That story's old as my old show.

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Looking far away)*—She was my daughter's daughter.

LUCRETIA—*(Yawning)*—Yes, and she put him in the back of an old wagon, and watched him by the light of sun and moon, and fed him a secret drink of roots and herbs and blood of goats *you* taught her how to make, Mrs. Komello——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Softly)*—I learn't it over the seas—a hundred years ago——

LUCRETIA—And so she won his life, and with his life she won his gorgio heart.

TELKA—*(Nudging her neighbor)*—How much did he pay for her, Mrs. Komello, when he took her to his own great house?

MRS. KOMELLO—He paid fifty dollars—with the same money he could have bought six of *you!*

LUCRETIA—*(Carelessly)*—And he made her his rawnie, married her by gorgio law! But, when her child was born, she took it and came back to us. And then she

died. Go, give the pot a good stir, little calf, before it burns. *(One of the younger girls obeys her.)*

MARIE—*(Curiously)*—And the gorgio's child? *(To Mrs. Komello)*—What happened to the child, Mrs. Komello?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Mumbling)*—Dead — both dead —and buried in one grave.

TAWNY CHAL—*(Calling over)*—Where's our supper? I'm hungry as a cow!

1st TINKER—*(Calling)*—The chief and his son have not come back.

2nd TINKER—*(To him)*—Where have they gone, brother?

1st TINKER—Where should they go—if not to the town, to get drunk. *(Meanwhile the girls are teasing Mrs. Komello, poking her, etc. She lunges out at them with her stick, they run back with bursts of laughter.)*

CASPER—Pull her beard—old toad! Look out—or she'll give you warts!

SOPHIE—Copperhead! Copperhead!

MRS. KOMELLA—*(Furiously)*—If my Egypt were only here you——

CASPER—*(In scorn)*—Egypt—She's not so strong—

TELKA—Nor so beautiful, either. Her hair is coarse as a mare's.

MARIE—And it's straight, with a curl at the end—like the hair of a witch!

TELKA—She has a mole on her left breast, too.

MARIE—*(Mysteriously)*—S-sh! That's where the Devil kissed her!

LUCRETIA—Supper's ready.

PERCIVAL SMITH—*(Rising)*—God be thanked! *(He stretches himself.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(Counting his money)*—Two—three-fifty—four—six—and six-seventy-five. I knew that charm would work.

STELLA—*(Calling to the fiddler)*—Come! Come while it's hot.

THE FIDDLER—Wait till I put away my fiddle. There——! *(They all gather, talking and laughing, near the fire. The women serve the stew, cups of tea, etc. The children wait upon the others.)*

LUCRETIA—Bring back that plate.

TAWNY CHAL—Give me two lumps of the meat. Remember—I stole the sheep.

ANNIE—*(To the fiddler)*—I picked the best for you.

LUCRETIA—*(To Sophia, who has broken a cup)*—You clumsy imp! Take that—and that—and that. *(Boxes her ears violently)*—One of my best cups! I bought it at a fair in Arkansas, the year I was married. *(She carefully puts away the pieces. Looking up and seeing EGYPT)*—So there you are, Egypt—you're late! *(The girl has appeared a few moments before this above the rest, at the top of the rocks during all this chatter, she has climbed down easily and quickly. She is a splendid savage young thing, swarthy and beautiful, in picturesque dress of gypsies—earrings, orange scarf over her black hair, red shawl, etc.)*

EGYPT—*(Peering here and there as she descends)*—Faro Black—where is he?

LUCRETIA—*(Maliciously)*—Off to the town, with a gorgio girl.

EGYPT—You lie. Give me some stew—I'll keep it for him. *(She covers one plate with another and sets it near the coals.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(Eagerly)*—Egypt! Come sit by me.

EGYPT—I am not hungry to-night, Tawny Chal.

TAWNY CHAL—But I stole the sheep for you alone. Look there! *(He shows her a piece of meat on the end of a fork.)*

LUCRETIA—What luck in the gorgio houses, Egypt?

EGYPT—*(Jangling the money tied up in her handkerchief)*—God knows—I've kept no count! *(She throws the handkerchief to Lucretia. They all reach for it.)*

LUCRETIA—*(Shrilly)*—She gave it to me! Egypt make them——

TAWNY CHAL—Untie it—quick!

PERCIVAL SMITH—*(Counting)*—Three — four — six—nine——

TAWNY CHAL—*(Admiringly)*—In five hours!—*(Meanwhile Egypt, leaving them to their wrangling, has crossed swiftly to where Mrs. Komello is still sitting against the great pine tree.)*

EGYPT—*(In a low, quick voice)*—Gran-bebee where is he?

MRS. KOMELLO—Who, my little swallow?

EGYPT—Mi.o pirino—my Faro—my lover!

MRS KOMELLO—Do I know what road a young chal follows?

EGYPT—They said he was off to the town with a gorgio girl! I saw one to-day—with hair like autumn leaves—*(With a sob)*—Oh, gran-bebee! He loves beautiful women!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Smoking)*—All men do that.

EGYPT—Gran-bebee, why will old Faro never let us marry? Why does he say 'Next month—next year—next week. It is too soon. You are too young. I am too busy!' Why does he torment me—why—*why?*

MRS. KOMELLO—My small wild swallow—I do not know. He is chief and he makes the law. So get me some stew or I shall die. Those snakes have given me nothing to eat since you went away!

EGYPT—*(Calling)*—Sophia! Supper! *(To Mrs. Komello, as she sits at her feet.)*—Gran-bebee!

MRS. KOMELLO—Yes, little daughter?

EGYPT—I must know he is all mine—every little piece of him—until we both are dead! *(Meanwhile Sophia brings a plate of stew and a cup of tea, then runs off again.)*

Mrs. KOMELLO—Then listen to a charm I used once—long ago when I was young—a charm that held him, body and soul, until——

EGYPT—Until what?

MRS. KOMELLO—Until I killed him, dearie. *(Egypt shudders and is silent)*—Cut the heart out of a milk-white pigeon and throw it beating on the coals.

EGYPT—*(Impatiently)*—Yes—yes. And what?

MRS. KOMELLO—And as it burns, you say these magic words. Here—turn me your ear. I cannot speak these secret things aloud. *(She whispers in the girl's ear.)*

EGYPT—*(When she has finished)*—I passed a pigeon-fair to-day. *(Suddenly with a cry)*—Ah!

MRS. KOMELLO—What now, little sweetheart?

EGYPT—*(Panting)*—And if to-night he's sleeping in a gorgio's bed—Gran-bebee! Tell me how you killed your lover! *(There is a slight pause.)*

MRS KOMELLO—*(At last)*—At midnight when there are wicked things let loose, I ran a needle through my little finger and then I squeezed three drops of blood upon the fire and said——*(Pause.)*

EGYPT—*(Quivering)*—Go on—go on—I shan't forget!

MRS. KOMELLO—"*As I prick my finger, I curse a nameless man. As the first drop falls his feet grow very tired! As the second follows, his blood runs very slow!*

*When a third has gone, his heart will beat no more. I blood!—die, man! Take him, Devil, for the charm done."*

EGYPT—*(Hardly breathing)*—And then?

MRS. KOMELLO—Dearie, that's all. In the m ing he was dead.

EGYPT—*(Trying to dispel her doubts)*—But he come, gran-bebee! Faro may come yet! Why, they stopped him on the road—his horse has lost a shoe——

MRS. KOMELLO—Eat, my child—eat while wait. Men have always lied to women. And this stew very good.

EGYPT—I—can't. — *(She looks up)* — Gran-bel LOOK in your tea-cup See what the leaves will to-night!

MRS. KOMELLO—A candle, little daughter. eyes are growing old. *(Egypt runs over to the tent, co out with candle, which she lights at the fire, and retu holding it near Mrs. Komello. The latter is looking i her cup muttering to herself.)*

*(Meanwhile.)*

LUCRETIA—Eight o'clock! May the Devil gu old Faro home—for he is surely full of brandy now!

TAWNY CHAL—*(Smoking his pipe by the fire)* What road do we take to-morrow?

PERCIVAL SMITH—North. There is a fair at Ro insville. The chief buys two more horses.

LUCRETIA—*(To her husband)*—And you a pair fine gold earrings—understand?

PERCIVAL—*(Gloomily)—Again?* Oh, Lord! Wh is the woman made of?

EGYPT—*(Who is crouching by Mrs. Komello's si peering into the cup)*—I can't see—is it a cross?

MRS. KOMELLO—Lift up the candle! *(Egypt do so.)*—A star, as plain as day. That's sudden news!

EGYPT—*(Eagerly)*—Pour in more tea—*(She do so.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Drinking)*—Saints in glory, t tea's as strong as lye!

EGYPT—Now look!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Peering into the cup)*—A bro en sword!

EGYPT—That means black suffering.

MRS. KOMELLO—So it does, my sweetheart.

EGYPT—*(Suddenly)*—And now the last time—

quick—you must drink it, gran-bebee, or else the charm is gone.

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Drinking)*—Ugh! GOD help us all, the tea's as bitter as sin!

EGYPT—*(Looking into the cup)*—Is it—oh, gran-bebee, is it a *bed?*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Peering at it also)*—Perhaps——

EGYPT—*(Rapturously)*—That's love! That's love!

MRS. KOMELLO—Yes, I see coffin nails!

EGYPT—*(Terrified)*—No—no——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Moving about the cup)*—And handles—and the shadow of a shroud——

EGYPT—Not death—not that, O God, not that.

MRS. KOMELLO—I'm not sure—wait—hold up the candle, little bird—*(Egypt does so, but Mrs. Komello drops the cup and it breaks.)*

EGYPT—*(With a little cry)*—A—ah!

MRS. KOMELLO—The Devil greased my fingers!—*(Lifting up the pieces)*—No, they are gone. Now we shall never know.

EGYPT—Love—or death—*(Whispering and clinging to the old woman)*—Oh, I'm afraid—gran-bebee, I'm afraid!—*(The old woman puts her arms about her. They stay thus, motionless, for a little while.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(To the Tinker)*—Brother, a little game?

1st TINKER—*(Assenting)*—Five hands—no more—*(They sit down L. C. to play poker.)*

LUCRETIA—*(To the young girls)*—Bring over the blankets. We shall have frost to-night.—*(Looking up)*—The stars are blazing! *(Maria and Telka, laughing among themselves, get the blankets and bedding from the wagons and carry them over to the tents. It is now quite dark. Percival lights two lanterns.)*

CASPER—*(Running over to where Egypt is crouching, the other children after him)*—Time for the story, now!

SOPHIA—*(Anxiously)*—Are you crying?

EGYPT—*(Rising)*—I? No—why should I cry?—*(She crosses over to the fire, then speaks to the woman with the small child)*—*(To the children, as she sits in the fire-light, the baby in her arms)*—Well, what story shall it be to-night?

SOPHIA—The Devil-Snake!

CASPER—No, the Black Cock!

SOPHIA—*(Shrilly)*—No, the Devil-Snake!

OTHER CHILDREN *(All together)*—"The Black Cock!" "Egypt!" "Please—!" "Don't mind her!" "Shut your mouth"—etc., etc.

EGYPT—*(Her finger to her lips mysteriously)*—Hark—the fairy music *(The children listen for a moment, impressed. The old man who played the concertina is leaning against a tree in the background, a guitar hung around his neck. He has begun striking low, strange chords and harmonics.)*

CASPER—*(Disappointed)*—It's only Old Lancelot, playing in the dark.

SOPHIA—The story Egypt—*please!*—*(Occasional fire-flies glimmer here and there.)*

EGYPT—Then here it is, the story. I learned from my gran-bebee over there, and she learned it from hers, who heard it told when she was young, across the sea, by a story-teller from the South—once upon a time there was a Romany chi who lived far, far, away at the ends of the earth, and loved a Romany Chal

SOPHIA—Was the Romany chi very beautiful?

EGYPT—Her lover told her so.

CASPER—And was the chal very big and strong?

EGYPT—Yes, he was straight as a pine tree and strong as a black bear and quicker than a mountain cat. He could tame the maddest horse without bit or bridle, he could fool the wisest man that ever wore spectacles, he could shoot one look of his yellow eyes and the women would smile and throw their souls at his feet!

LUCRETIA—*(Coming out of one of the tents)*—Sophia! Casper! Come to bed.

SOPHIA—*(Calling back)*—I'm coming—*(To Egypt)*—I love the story!

EGYPT—Good night!—*(Meanwhile young FARO BLACK, the son of the chief, has slowly appeared—L., and now stands watching her sombrely as she croons and hums, the baby in her arms. He is a tall straight handsome young gypsy, with a dark, strong face and the smooth walk of a tiger. He wears corduroy trousers, a red scarf about his neck, a slouch hat with a cock's feather, and he carries a whip, the buttons on his jacket are silver dollars—his arms are tatooed.)*—*(She gradually becomes conscious of his presence, looks up, sees him and stops.)*

EGYPT—Faro!—*(Rising)*—Then it *was* your call I heard!—*(She comes eagerly up to him, but he has sullenly*

*refused to answer and has passed her by. She looks after him piteously, then runs over to the tent and a moment later appears without the child. He goes to the fire, lights his pipe with a coal, and turns to the poker-players.)*

MARIA—*(To the other)*—There is young Faro! Quick, where are my rattlers?—*(They hurry about.)*

FARO—*(With a grunt)* Who wins, brothers?—*(He puts his hands on their shoulders.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(Not looking up)*—Me.

THE TINKER—Where is the chief?

FARO—At the tavern, brother.

TAWNY CHAL—You were not with him?

FARO—No, brother, not I.—*(Meanwhile the women have come out of the tent, and the two girls are dancing by the fire, to the music of the fiddle and the concertina.)*

PERCIVAL SMITH — *(Looking at them)* — A-ha! That's right! Faster now!

LUCRETIA—*(To another woman, her sewing in her hand)*—They cannot dance as we used to do—eh?

FARO—*(Looking at them)*—Good! Again——*(He claps his hands.)*

EGYPT—*(To Mrs. Komello, in a spasm of jealous rage)*—I'll prick my finger in the fire to-night to-morrow he'll be dead!

FARO—*(To the fiddler)*—Play faster—ah! That's right! Good girls!

EGYPT—*(Coming out of the tent, springing into the ring and snatching away the castanets from one of the girls)*—Is there room for me? No? Then *make* room, you cows—oh, Tawny Chal!

TAWNY CHAL—*(Eagerly)*—Egypt!

EGYPT—*(Voluptuously)*—Come dance with me! I'm waiting.

TAWNY CHAL—*(Rapturously)*—Little sweetheart! —*(They dance together.)*

EGYPT—*(Breathlessly to the fiddler)*—Faster— is this a funeral? *Faster——!* —*(The dance grows wilder. The other girls have stopped, enraged at her intrusion.)*

TELLSOR—*(With sudden enthusiasm)*—Good leap, Tawny Chal, good leap!

THE TINKER—Lord! How she twists!

LUCRETIA—*(Scornfully)*—I am sure she is double-jointed. *Anyone* can dance that way if she's double-jointed!

PERCIVAL—*(To Tawny Chal, laughing)* — A-ah!

She is melting, brother—melting at last—*(She is in fact, dancing more and more voluptuously, smiling upon her partner.)*

EGYPT—*(Breathless)*—Faster! *Faster, I say?—(The music worked up, together with the dance, to frantic haste. Suddenly Tawny Chal stops and holds open his arms, letting the dance go.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(With a cry of passion)—Egypt!*

EGYPT—Tawny Chal—*(She is about to throw herself into his arms when Faro, with a smothered oath, tossing away his pipe, steps between them and seizes her himself in a passionate embrace)—(With a cry of triumph)*—A-ah! You love me—I knew—I knew!—*(She flings her arms about his neck.)*

TAWNY CHAL—*(Turning away)*—Damn her to hell!—*(The men, laughing at him, go back to their poker.)*

ONE OF THE GIRLS—The way she did it!

THE OTHER—She has no shame at all!—*(The women disappear into the tents.)*

EGYPT—*(Disengaging herself from Faro's embrace and leading him towards the fire)*—Look! Here is your supper. I have kept it hot for you—and it is mutton-stew, with plenty of little onions!

FARO—*(Taking it)*—I've had my supper.

EGYPT—Where have you been?

FARO—In the shade of gorgio's house.

EGYPT—*(Jealously)*—A-ah! It's a woman——

FARO—*(Calmly)*—No. A horse.

EGYPT—Thank God! Did you steal him?

FARO—Yes, it was that that made me late.

EGYPT—*(Suddenly)*—Your father——

FARO—Well?

EGYPT—He's getting drunk—he won't return till dawn—who knows?

FARO—The devil, my father, and God alone!

EGYPT—Then this is our night, Faro——

FARO—What?

EGYPT—If we wait, he'll sell me. But—he's away—he's gone now——

FARO—Well?

EGYPT—*(Passionately)*—Marry me to-night, Faro!

FARO—*(Suspiciously)*—And then?

EGYPT—Go south with the new horse and the light-wagon. When he comes back, we shall be miles away—you and I—rom and rawnie!

FARO—Stop—! I'm thinking.—*(Pause)*—No. We shall wait for him. When you make his coffee, I shall put in some pig-poison. Then *I* shall be chief—I can have all the horses and you and my father's new gun.

EGYPT—*(Frightened)*—Drab him as we'd drab a bawlor! No—he's your father! We should have three-headed children—*(With a shudder)*—No, Faro, not that!

FARO—*(With sombre irritation)*—I want that doubled barrelled gun!

EGYPT—*(In a rage)*—You mean you want it more than you want me! A gun—a gun!

FARO—Oh God! You blaze like pitch!

EGYPT—So—! Now it's plain! Do you think I dare! Just wait and see!—*(Calling)*—Tawney Chal—Tawny Chal, are you there?

TAWNY CHAL—*(Running up)*—Egypt!

FARO—*(Between them)*—She's my woman, Tawny Chal.

TAWNY CHAL—Not yet brother—not yet!

FARO—Mine, by God!—*(Calling)*—Percival Smith—Lancelot King—Mrs. Smith—you—you, John—you—all of you! come here!

LUCRETIA—*(Appearing at the tent door)*—What is it?

TAWNY CHAL—He's out of his head—that's all—*(They all gather round Faro.)*

FARO—I take a wife to-night.

PERCIVAL SMITH—A wife—!

LUCRETIA—She's got him at last!

PERCIVAL—But the chief—your father——

FARO—*(Interrupting)*—We shall be gone when he comes back.

TAWNY CHAL—He'll catch you—sure as death!

FARO—*(Looking at his watch)*—It's after eight. Come to the fire—! All of you—quick! Egypt!—*(There is a rustle and movement and murmur as they obediently turn towards the fire.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Suddenly)*—No—no—no—!—*(They turn startled.)*

FARO—Come, Egypt—quick!

EGYPT—*(Pausing)*—Gran-bebee!

MRS. KOMELLO—Sweetheart, it's your unlucky day. The stars are cold to-night. There are blind things flapping in the air.

FARO—*(With a laugh)*—A mad old woman! See, they are all ready!—*(He tries to draw Egypt away.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Wailing)*—My daughter—little daughter!

EGYPT—*(Simply)*—I—I love him, gran-bebee.—*(He draws her over to the fire, where, on the right side are the women—on the left the men. Egypt takes her place before the women, Faro before the men. The dying fire is between them; its red glow lights up their faces. Over it they clasp one another's hands. Old Lancelot again plays his guitar.)*

FARO—*(Solemnly)*—"Fire, you who burn the bad people, whose flames devour the very earth, bring death to both of us if our vows are broken"!

EGYPT—*(Echoing him)*—"Bring death to both of us, if our vows are broken."

FARO—*(Taking wa[illegible] from a jar in his hands and throwing it into the air, whence it falls upon the coals)*—"The waters of the earth shall never keep us apart."

EGYPT—*(Tossing up some soil which she picks from ground)*—"The roads of the earth shall always lead us together."

FARO—"The fires of our love shall never fall to ashes——"

EGYPT—*(Finishing the tirual)*—"So long as we breathe the air that——"

TAWNY CHAL *(Interrupting)*—*Hark—!*—*(They all turn and listen; there is a dead silence)*—I thought I heard. . . .

PERCIVAL SMITH—It was an owl's hoot. Nothing more.

FARO—*(To Egypt)*—Quick—go on!

EGYPT—*(Taking off her dikla or girdle)*—"My virgin girdle is no longer mine, but yours."

FARO—*(Taking it and laying it on the coals)*—"My flames will burn it."—*(It bursts into fire and lights up their faces and figures, then dies down.)*

LUCRETIA—*(Clapping)*—That's a good sign!

ONE OF THE GIRLS—How high the flames reach!

THE OTHER—You lucky Egypt!

FARO—The Brandy!—*(It is passed by the women in cups, Lucretia pouring it.)*

ALL MEN—*(Holding up their cups)*—Live!

WOMEN—*(In answer)*—Be happy!—*(Both women and men drink their health.)*

FARO—Brothers, the wedding Song!

MEN AND WOMEN—*(Singing, clapping hands to mark the rythm.)*

"Kay o kam avriavel
Kiya mange lele beshel!
Kay o kam tel' avel
Kiya lelakin me beshair!"

*(Meanwhile as they sing, Faro has bared his breast and has cut the skin just over his heart, with his jack-knife. He dips his fingers into the blood and stretches them out to mark Egypt's forehead, she kneeling before him, when suddenly the song stops in the middle of a phrase. Everyone huddles away, again looking towards Back. Egypt and Faro stand alone by the fire, also looking back. The Old Chief has returned. He appeared just after the beginning of the song, and has been standing at back, above the rocks, looking down malignantly upon the scene. He is a huge old gypsy with uncut grey hair, an air of indescribable authority. He carries a double-barrelled gun. He walks slowly down, amid a terrified silence, to where Egypt and Faro are still standing, over the fire, hypnotized by his presence.)*

OLD FARO—*(At last)*—What are you doing there? —*(Pause)*—I thought I heard the wedding song—*(Pause)* —No doubt it was the wind among the trees—*(To the rest)*—Why do you look away—Percival Smith—Tawny Chal—Lancelot—Lucretia Smith—what have you done to stand before me silent and ashamed?

EGYPT—*(Bursting out)*—Oh it's true! It's true! We cannot fight the stars!

OLD FARO—*(Smiling)* So it *was* the wedding song! And you swore the oath and burnt the girdle and split the brandy—all for—nothing!—*(Sudden movement on the part of Egypt.)*

EGYPT—*(Under her breath)*—No!

OLD FARO—*(Always to his son)*—Yes—nothing! I have made another plan for Egypt here—*(Calling)*—Listen—all of you! Do you know where your poor old chief has been?

TAWNY CHAL—How should we know, Mr. Black?

OLD FARO—I have made a visit, Tawny Chal. I have made a visit to a rich gorgio, who owns many trotting horses. One of them I saw tied to a tree as I came into camp.—*(Looking at his son.)*—God and the devil, who alone know everything, know how he came here! This rich gorgio was the husband of a Romany Chi. She lived

two years in his house and then by night she took his daughter back to the gypsy fires and to us of the dark quarry. And when she died, some said the child died, too. Now, listen! For this is the strangest thing of all! She did *not* die, this child of a gorgio father and a Romany mother——

EGYPT—*(Staring at him)*—No!

OLD FARO—*(Turning suddenly and for the first time to Egypt)*—She is alive—and full of blood—and beautiful as a young eagle——

EGYPT—*(In growing terror)*—No! Stop it! No!

OLD FARO—Little one, I see the truth hiding in your eyes! For by God! It *is* the truth! *You* are the gorgio's daughter! I have told him you are here, I am selling you back to him for a thousand dollars——

EGYPT—*(Covering her ears)*—No—no—it's a lie—hukni—I don't believe it—it's not true.

OLD FARO—I have shown him the little dress and chain of gold you wore when your mother laid you at my feet. . . .

EGYPT—*(Screaming)*—You lie— you're an old liar—we all know that——!

OLD FARO—You don't believe me—so? But your father believes me, little gorgio woman! He has gone to the town to get the money, he is coming here to take you away—now—this very night—*(With a laugh)*—your wedding night!

EGYPT—*(Desperately)* — Gran-bebee — *(She runs across to the old woman, who now risen for the first time, and totters, bent and feeble towards the chief.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Shrilly)*—Faro Black—will you sell my flesh and blood—the last thing I have on earth—my little sweetheart—my own——

OLD FARO—*(Interrupting)*—Back to your bed, you old hen hatched from a rotten egg——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Shaking her stick at him)*—Wait till the gorgio comes and I tell him the truth!

OLD FARO—*(Savagely)*—Shut your gums, old cat, or——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(As before)*—Liar! Devil!

OLD FARO—*(Between his teeth)*—Old fool—*(He seizes her by the throat and chokes the words out of her mouth, shakes her violently backward and forward, and throws her to the ground, where she lies quivering and exhausted.)*

EGYPT—*(Clinging to Faro)*—Faro! You won't let them take me?

FARO—*(Putting his arm around her and lifting his head)*—No, by God!—this is our wedding night!

OLD FARO—*(Contemptuously)*—Have you forgotten the day you disobeyed me last? Look out, my son!—*(Turning to where Mrs. Komello lies groaning and touching her with his foot.)*—Get up!

EGYPT—*(To Faro—in a whisper)*—Kill him, Faro—kill him—now—oh, *kill* him——!

OLD FARO—*(Laughing)*—The old blind goose—her brain is full of bugs!—*(Faro who has held his jack-knife in his hand since the abrupt interruption of the ceremony, now comes up behind his father with a panther's tread, ready to stab him in the back.)*

LUCRETIA—*(Screaming involuntarily at the sight)*—A-ah!—*(Just as Old Faro turns round, four of the men rush forward and seize young Faro, who is on the point of striking. There is a violent struggle.)*

FARO—*(Yelling)*—Let me go! I'll kill him—I'll cut his heart out—you can't stop me! Damn you, *let me go!*—*(He is finally overcome and his arms are jerked back and held behind him.)*

OLD FARO—*(Laughing)*—Kill me! Go on. I'd like to see you!—*(Slight pause as he looks contemptuously at his son)*—Young fool!—*(He strikes him carelessly on the mouth, then speaking to the men)*—Strap him to a tree and cool him down. I'll fix him later.—*(The men drag Faro away silently)*—*(Turning to Egypt.)*—Egypt!

EGYPT—Yes, Mr. Black.

OLD FARO—Will you obey my law?

EGYPT—*(Quietly)*—No, Mr. Black.

OLD FARO—*(Walking up to her and looking her in the eye.)*—Do you remember an autumn night, last year, on the Western plain?—*(There is a frightened murmur from the gypsies.)*

EGYPT—*(Pause)*—Yes, Mr. Black.

OLD FARO—You watched till dawn, and then at last you saw a woman die?—*(Slight pause)*—Do I speak clearly, little Egypt?

EGYPT—*(With a shiver)*—Yes, Mr. Black.

OLD FARO—Then you'll obey my law?

EGYPT—*(Almost whispering)*—I can't——

OLD FARO—*(With a sudden snarl)*—Take off your shawl!—*(Calling)*—Here—you and Smith! Hold her

hands! My whip, Tawny Chal—the old one! Quick!—*(Percival Smith and the fiddler come forward reluctantly, Egypt with set lips, has taken off her shawl, and kneels, her head bowed. The two men hold her hands. Tawny Chal returns with a black snake-whip.)*

LUCRETIA—*(Impulsively)*—Oh, the poor child!

OLD FARO—*(Ready with the whip)*—For the last time, Egypt Komello?

EGYPT—I love him, Mr. Black.—*(In a spasm of rage he leans over and rips her dress down the back—her flesh is exposed. Then he steps back for the first stroke. Just here from the not far-distant road is heard the "Honk! Honk!" of a motor car.)*

OLD FARO—*(Listening—his whip upraised)*—The gorgios!—*(Throwing down the whip)*—Quick—you boy! They're on the road! Stop them and bring them here!—*(The Fiddler runs up back and disappears.)*

OLD FARO—*(To Egypt)*—Get up. Put on your shawl. Your father's coming.

EGYPT—*(Wildly)*—Whip me! Whip me to death! Go on—I'd rather——!

OLD FARO—*(Savagely)*—Get up, I say!—*(He pulls her violently to her feet. Then to Lucretia)*—Open my oldest whiskey—and have the glasses clean!—*(To the Tinker)*—Here then—another log on the fire! Now—off with your hats when the gorgios come—*(Kicking a sleeping man.)*—Up with you—stand!—*(Perceiving Egypt slinking off into the darkness L., he reaches her with a bound and drags her back.)*—Here, none of that, you slut! Come back!—*(To the men.)*—Keep your eye on her, pals. She'll be off like a snake. That's right.—*(She stands quietly during the following scene—a sullen, beautiful silent young animal.)*—*(Meanwhile from above the rocks at back, can be heard the Fiddler.)*

FIDDLER—This way, sirs! Be careful—there are roots in the path! Give me your hand, sir—there!—*(He emerges finally. LINDSAY and NICK van KLEET follow him. Lindsay is a hot-headed, affectionate, nervous man of sixty or so, at present embarrassed and constrained at being placed in such an extraordinary situation. He is torn between his desire to get his daughter back and his resentment against those who have brought so much suffering upon him by stealing her. Nick van Kleet is a clever, whimsical, experienced man of about thirty-eight. He is the girl's god-father, and an old friend of Lindsay's. He*

*is fully alive to the interest and humor of the situation. Both men are in motoring dress. OLD FARO stands bowing and fawning, ready to receive them. All the gypsies have taken off their hats, somewhat awkwardly.)*

LINDSAY—*(Seeing Old Faro)*—Oh, there you are!

OLD FARO—*(Sweetly)*—You have been quick, my friend!

LINDSAY—*(Climbing down)*—I came in a motor—now where is she?

OLD FARO—Surely the father will know his child among a thousand!

LINDSAY—*(Looking about awkwardly)*—Can't say I do. You see it's a long time since.—*(Bursting out suddenly.)*—Damn you, where's my daughter? *I want my daughter!*

OLD FARO—Look, sir! There she is—behind you. The most beautiful chi I have ever seen—and gentle and sweet as a little lamb! Surely the good Lord has blessed you, sir, when he——

LINDSEY—*(Looking at the group among which Egypt stands)*—Which one?

NICK—*(Who has been looking at them, now speaking quietly)*—The one with the red shawl, Lindsey.—*(To Old Faro)*—Got such a thing as a match?

LINDSEY—How do *you* know?

NICK—I dunno—but I do!—*(To Old Faro)*—Thanks. *(He lights a cigarette.)*

OLD FARO—*(Sulkily)*—The gentleman is right, sir, he is very quick! Yes, that is your daughter. Come, my Egypt!—*(To Lindsey)*—See, the poor child is afraid of you!—*(To Egypt)*—Come, my dear, the gentleman's name is Lindsey. He is very rich and he is your father.

NICK—"Egypt."

OLD FARO—*(Deprecating)*—The foolish name we gypsies gave her in our ignorance!

NICK—*(To himself, staring at her)*—*Egypt!*

LINDSEY—*(Going up to her)*—Yes, it's all right—don't be afraid!—*(Then hardly able to control his emotion he takes her in his arms.)*—My Blanche—my little girl! Don't you remember your old daddy? Of course you don't, but never mind, it'll come—it'll come—excuse me, dear—I—I didn't know you were going to look so like your mother!—*(He turns aside, suddenly, to blow his nose.)*

NICK—*(Throwing away his cigarette and going up to her)*—We're old friends, you and I—in fact, I'm your

god-father. I believe I'm held responsible for your good behavior—altho' I've known you to break my watch three times in one week! And now—by Jove!—you've grown into a regular serpent of Old Nile! Won't you shake hands?—*(He holds out his hand. After a moment, she gives him hers, which he raises lightly to his lips.)*

LINDSEY—*(Turning round to Old Faro, suddenly, and bullying him to relieve emotion)*—You old vagabond thief you, I've spent the best years of my life trying to find my daughter—I say, I've spent over a hundred thousand dollars, first and last—in——

OLD FARO—*(Imperturably)*—And now, sir, you pay only one. That is certainly very cheap. Let us go into the tent and talk business.

LINDSEY—*(Exploding)*—It's only because I gave you my word of honor that I pay you one cent! And what's more, I'm going straight from here to the Aiken Police Department—I'm going to have you and your whole gang jailed inside of twenty-four hours—*(There is an ominous murmur on the part of the listening gypsies)*—I say, I'll teach you thieves a lesson that won't be forgotten in a hundred years, I'll——

EGYPT—*(Interrupting him, speaking for the first time)*—No—no!

LINDSEY—*(Turning belligerently)* — Why not? — *(Suddenly softening his tone)*—Why not, my dear?

EGYPT—Because—if I'm your daughter, sir—you must be good to—to—*(She stops unable to go on.)*

LINDSEY—*(Tenderly)*—Have they treated you well, dear? You've nothing to complain of?

EGYPT—*(With a sudden quiver of tears)*—No—no—

LINDSEY—Well, then—*(Turning sternly to Old Faro*—If I let you off you have my daughter to thank—understand. Now I'm going to pay you your blood-money and get her out of this filthy hole!

OLD FARO—*(Grinning)*—It is indeed no place for your honor's daughter! If your honor and the other gentleman will kindly step inside my tent—*(He holds open the door, a lantern in his hand.)*

LINDSEY—*(To Nick, who is staring at Egypt*—Come along, Nick. What are you looking at?

VAN KLEET—*(Oddly)*—Memphis — Thebes — the Sphinx—Royal Egypt!— *(Turning away quickly with a smile)*—In here?

OLD FARO—If you please, gentlemen, if you please!

—*(To the other gypsies*—Be still, you dogs, and don't disturb their honors' talk! Remember—not a word!—*(He follows Lindsey and Nick into the tent. Their shadows can be seen on the canvas.)*

*(There is a pause, during which one of the girls rakes together the coals and the other hangs the kettle. Tawny Chal grunts to Smith, who answers with a shrug of the shoulders. John, the fiddler, lights his pipe with a coal. The women go in the other tent, one or two inside the wagons. Four of the men wrap themselves in blankets and lie around the fire. At last they have all faded away—Egypt stands alone and immobile, looking straight before her. Suddenly Mrs. Komello is seen crawling towards her from out the darkness, sobbing in a dry, tearless way. Egypt bends over, when the old woman has touched her foot, and raises her to her feet. She holds her in her arms.)*

EGYPT—*(Whispering)* — S-sh! You heard, gran-bebee?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Between her sobs)*—I heard—little swallow——

EGYPT—Is it true, then? Am I that gorgio's daughter?—*(Pause.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—God forgive me, what can I say but "yes?"—*(Pause.)*

EGYPT—*(Strangely)*—I see. The leaves were right, gran-bebee. Black suffering—love—or death——!

*(Suddenly from the left is heard the note of quail, piercing the darkness.)*

EGYPT—*(Starting)*—Hark!

MRS. KOMELLO—It's the young chal. I unbuckled the straps. Go to him, dearie—he wants to say good-bye!

*(Egypt leaves the old woman, crosses swiftly to extreme left, where, in the light of a lantern, hung to a tree, young Faro comes out of the woods, pale and a little unsteady on his feet.)*

EGYPT—Faro!—*(He takes her desperately in his arms. There is a passionate embrace.)*

FARO—*(Muttering)*—Your lips—your mouth — *(He kisses her)*—Egypt—my own rawnie—*(He kisses her again.)*

EGYPT—*(Brokenly)*—Behind the bad luck—comes—the good!

FARO—I know—heart of my heart—there's sleep at the end of the longest road.

EGYPT—*(Thro' her tears)*—The stars have said it.

Faro. We must smile and bear. Everything comes if the gypsy waits!—*(With a sob)*—But—but oh! we are tired of waiting—you and I!

FARO—Our wedding night—I see it through a mist of years!—*(Passionately)*—But it will happen—somewhere—sometime—as surely as the rivers reach the sea!

EGYPT—I shall be ready, Faro. You are the master—I am the slave.—*(He crushes her to him again. Then suddenly remembering, he very hastily puts his hand to his heart and makes a bloody sign upon her forehead.)*

FARO—There! My mark is on you!

EGYPT—The waters of the world can never wash it away!

FARO—*(Slipping a charm from about his neck)*—Here is the charm my mother gave me the night she died. —*(As he hangs it about her neck.)*—It'll bring what you love most on this earth——

EGYPT—Then it will bring you back to me!

FARO—*(Suddenly)* — S-st! — *(He looks up)* — No, they're still in the tent—I can see their shadows——

EGYPT—*(Taking off the silk handkerchief that is about her head gypsy fashion and giving it to him)*—It's all I have. Take it—put it where your heart will keep it warm! Look at it on nights like this—think of me—Faro, *think of me sometimes.*

FARO—*(Putting the handkerchief under his shirt and looking up)*—They're coming—damn their souls——

EGYPT—*(Passionately)*—I don't care—kiss me!—*(Their lips meet as Lindsey, Nick and Old Faro comes out of the tent.)*

LINDSEY—*(Peering about)*—Where's my daughter?

OLD FARO—*(Counting a roll of bills*—Two hundred and fifty—three hundred—three hundred and fifty——

FARO—*(In Egypt's arms)*—I love you—maduvaleste——!

EGYPT—I love you—I shall love you when the last dawn breaks upon the world.—*(He gives her one last kiss, she tears herself away abruptly)*—Now—*go!*

LINDSEY—*(Seeing her)*—Oh, there you are! Come along, little daughter!—*(She faces him and walks toward him as if to her destruction.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Standing up suddenly and lifting her stick high above her head, the red firelight falling upon her figure)*—The curse is on you, Romany tribe! It will turn your skins white and your red blood black and

suck you dryer than the dryest bone. There will never be cinders in your forges, nor bread in your mouths, nor sleep in your eyes. You're cursed, you gypsy people!

NICK—*(Startled)*—Good Lord, what's that?

OLD FARO—*(Smiling)*—A mad old woman with a wicked tongue and no teeth.

LINDSEY—Look out—she's coming for you, Nick!

NICK—*(Half terrified)*—Here—keep away there!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Peering uncannily into his face)*—This is a bad day for you, pretty gentleman—a bad—bad day.

NICK—*(Trying to smile)*—My dear old lady, I——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Interrupting)*—You'll remember what the old gypsy woman told you here under the pine trees—you'll remember when the night has come!

NICK—Nonsense! Now if—*(He makes as if to pass her.)*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(In a spasm of malignant rage)*—Bengois your see! Beng in tutes bukko!

NICK—What's that she says?

OLD FARO—*(Politely)*—She says, your honor, that she hopes the devil will eat your heart and your stomach.

*(Meanwhile Faro has crossed the stage, among the trunks and now passes at back. His shadow suddenly falls upon Nick, obliterating him for a moment. Egypt sees this and shrieks aloud suddenly.)*

NICK—What's the matter *now?*

EGYPT—Nothing. A shadow passed over you. A black shadow.

NICK—*(Turning quickly just in time to see young Faro melt away in the darkness right back)*—Who's that? I saw someone move back there!

EGYPT—It's only a pine tree in the wind of the night.

NICK—*(Coming up to her*—What's that red mark on your forehead?

EGYPT—Only the light of the fire.—*(Passing her arm over her brow)*—See—it's all gone!

NICK—*(Shivering)*—I'm cold.

LINDSEY—*(Impatiently)*—Well, my dear, it's time we were off!

EGYPT—I'm ready—*(Slight pause)*—sir.—*(He puts his arm about her. Nick is on her other side. All three turn towards back, meanwhile Old Faro has lit a pine-knot*

*at the fire and has been standing on the rocks waiting for them.)*

**OLD FARO**—This way to the road, my lady and gentleman—this way! Mind your steps—there are holes here! It's easy to slip when you come to the gypsy camp. But don't be afraid—I'll show you the way—*(He precedes them, up the rocks, talking as he goes; as he talks the curtain falls softly.)*

# Act 2

SCENE.

JUST FOUR YEARS LATER. "The Bungalow," Lindsey's winter house near Aiken. It is a conventional, handsome library in Colonial style. To right are two windows, opening on the terrace and garden; between them a long window-door. To back-centre, up two steps, are the wide double doors opening into the hall, drawing-rooms, etc. These doors are now closed. To left is another double-entrance leading into the dining room. The stage is elaborately and beautifully decorated with palms, satin ribbons, white roses, orchids, etc. There are heavy garlands hanging from the four corners of the ceiling—attached in the centre of the chandelier. The fire-place at left is banked with ferns and roses, and a sheaf of orchids hangs over the big piano—right back. At the foot of the steps, on each side, enormous bouquets of ferns and roses are tied to the balustrade, and there are two huge piles of broad white satin ribbon, ready for the ushers to mark the aisle. Flowers everywhere. An elaborate house-wedding is at once suggested.

It is almost half-past four on a spring afternoon. During the latter half of the acts clouds come up and obscure the sun. At the end it is quite black outside.

As the curtain rises, Mrs. Sturges—a conventional autocratic, kindly little woman of fifty or so, beautifully dressed in pale grey and wearing wonderful pearls—is talking to two caterer's men.

MRS. STURGES—*(Finishing her instructions)*—The wedding's set for five, but don't begin uncorking the champagne till half-past. Mr. Lindsey hates it flat. Now let me see—is there anything more! Be sure to have a big knife ready for Miss Lindsey to cut the cake—Mrs. Van Kleet, I mean. And remember—the confetti's to be passed when she goes up to change her gown.

*(The men bow and EXIT L—into the dining room as Rosie Green and Anita Sturges, the two bridesmaids, come*

*in from back. They are pretty, smart young girls—dressed just alike in elaborately simple gowns and hats.)*

ROSIE—*(Entering)*—Oh, Mrs. Sturges, the latest is, they won't go North until to-morrow! She's sending all her trunks by motor to the Crossways. I knew he'd take her to his own house first, and then——

ANITA—*(Interrupting)*—They're going up in his private car. What a perfectly gorgeous honeymoon that girl will have! Oh, dear, I wish a multi-millionaire would cast his eye on *me!*

MRS. STURGES—Where *is* Blanche anyway?

ANITA—Isn't she down here?

MRS. STURGES—I haven't seen her.—*(To Mary Bellamy, who enters from back)*—Mary, where's Blanche? I asked her to come straight here as soon as she'd finished dressing.

MARY—I don't know, Mrs. Sturges. Oh, by the way, girls, you haven't noticed my jade-bracelet anywhere?

ROSIE—No. Have you lost it?

MARY—Well, I left it on my dressing-table yesterday and now it's gone.

MRS. STURGES—There can't be thieves among these servants—*(She is interrupted by the entrance of Giles, the butler, from left.)*

GILES—The musicians, madam.

MRS. STURGES—*(Turning)*—Put them under the stairs, behind the palms. I'll speak to them later. And Giles, those bouquets haven't come!

GILES—*(Discreetly)*—I beg pardon, madam. The hexpress office 'as just telephoned. They couldn't find a messenger, h'owing to the village being disturbed.

ANITA—What's the matter?

GILES—*(Haughtily)*—Some drunken quarrel, miss. Young Bayes, the stationmaster's son, was hinjured by a tramp. I 'eard no further details. The bouquets are on their way.

MARY—How dreadful!

MRS. STURGES—Oh, Giles, you haven't seen Miss Blanche, have you?

GILES—*(Coldly)*—Yes, madam. I noticed 'er from the pantry window running very swift in the direction of the stables.

MRS. STURGES—What—? Not *dressed*—

GILES—She was carrying 'er train hover one arm.

EGYPT—*(Coming in from back)*—Dear Aunt Emma!

I *hope* I haven't kept you waiting!—*(She is dressed in a beautiful wedding dress, her long lace veil thrown back from her face.)*

MRS. STURGES—*(Severely)*—Blanche, what's this about your going down to the stables?

EGYPT—*(Innocently)*—The stables?

MRS. STURGES—Giles said he saw you.

EGYPT—Me? Why, I've been upstairs in my room! I've just come down this minute.

ROSIE—No, really? We knocked on your door a little while ago, but there wasn't any answer.

EGYPT—Wasn't there? I'm sorry, dear. My thoughts were—er—very far away. You see, girls, I'm old-fashioned enough to take my marriage quite seriously, and after I'd finished dressing I—you musn't think it foolish—but I just knelt down and made a little prayer for Nick and me.

MRS. STURGES—*(Touched)*—Blanche, that was very sweet! I can't tell you how it touches me to hear it.

EGYPT—*(To Giles)*—I hope, Giles, you'll be a little more careful in the future about making sure of things before repeating them. It's a very bad habit and this isn't the first time I've had to speak to you about it.

GILES—Thank you, Miss.—*(To Mrs. Sturges)*—Is there anything more, madam?

MRS. STURGES—No. Bring in the bouquets when they come.

EGYPT—And, Giles, if you want to consult an occulist about these hallucinations of yours, why Mr. Lindsey would be only too happy to arrange the matter.—*(Giles bows and exits.)*

MRS. STURGES—*(Who has been examining Egypt's feet)*—Blanche! Your slippers—!

EGYPT—*(Drawing them up quickly under her dress)*—Well?

MRS. STURGES—*(Horrified)*—Isn't that *mud* on them?

EGYPT—*(Laughing)*—Why, Aunt Emma! Your eyes are *just* as bad as Giles'!

MRS. STURGES—Where's your other glove?

EGYPT—I must have left it upstairs.—*(Turning to the piano where Rosie is playing)*—Now, Rosie—come along! Nita! I'm going to give you all your presents!—*(She takes three jeweller's boxes from the piano.)*

ROSIE—How splendid!

ANITA—You're a dear, Blanche!

MARY—I know they'll be lovely!—*(They gather about her.)*

EGYPT—*(Selecting one box)*—Rosie's first.—*(Sweetly to Rosie)*—Dear Rosie, I suppose this is really the parting of the ways, because I'm going to be married in half an hour and you're not even engaged yet, are you? But never mind, dear—that'll come if you're a good girl and stop that dreadful, unladylike habit of swearing—

MRS. STURGES—*(Horrified)*—*Swearing—? Rosie—!*

ROSIE—*(Disconcerted)*—Well, I like that, when it's you that taught me!

EGYPT—*(Soothingly)*—So whenever you feel the ugly little words biting at your insides, just look at this ring and say "For Blanche's sake, I won't let them out"! —*(Kissing her and giving her the box.)*—Do try, dear—and ask God to help you!

ROSIE—*(Coolly)*—Thanks— you're awfully kind.

EGYPT—*(To Anita)*—Now, Anita—I know you won't mind my giving *you* a few words of advice, too. I've been very pained to notice that you're in the habit of saying things that, to be frank, aren't quite true. Now, truth is the most beautiful thing in all the world——

ANITA—*(Interrupting)*—Blanche, you're horrid!

EGYPT—Darling, it's for your own good! And I think you ought to struggle hard against this weakness, because just suppose for the sake of argument, that there *is* a possibility of your getting married——

MRS. STURGES—*(Interrupting)*—My dear!

EGYPT—Think how humiliating to have your husband find out you're a liar——

ANITA—Blanche!

EGYPT—*(Sweetly giving her the box and kissing her)*—So dear, you must wear this little pendant always, and I hope you'll feel it burning every time you want to tell a fib and——

ANITA—*(Irritated)*—*I* don't want your pendant, and, Blanche Lindsey, when it comes to telling fibs, there isn't a girl I know that's a patch on you!

MRS. STURGES—Now, Nita——

EGYPT—*(With sweet reproach)*—My dear, how can you say such things! Why, I'd rather die than soil *my* lips with a lie!

*(Enter GILES from left, carrying a long white glove as if it was a snake.)*

GILES—I beg pardon, miss, but this was found by the stable-boy outside your mare's box-stall.

EGYPT—What? Why, it's my glove!—*(Snatching it from him)*—I wonder how on earth it got down there! *(She shoots him a venomous glance)*—However, it doesn't matter, does it? That's all, Giles—you may go. Thanks so much for bringing it to me.

GILES—Not at all, miss.—*(He exits left.)*

EGYPT—*(After him, under her breath)*—You son of a rattlesnake.

ANITA—*(As soon as Giles has gone)*—Who's a liar now?

MRS. STURGES—*(Sternly)*—Blanche, what made you go down to the stables?

EGYPT—Well, I couldn't get married without kissing the horses good bye, could I? *(To Mary)*—And here's *your* present, you old darling. I hope you're to get a *splendid* husband—all big and angry and beautiful! I hope you'll love him—oh, very much indeed! and cook him all sorts of good things to eat and have one baby a year—forever and ever—amen!—*(She pins a brooch on Mary's heart and kisses her.)*

MARY—*(Laughing)*—Is that your idea of a husband—?

EGYPT—*(Eagerly)*—Yes— someone to be afraid of—someone to obey! Someone who could carry me home and rip off my clothes and whip me till my back was wet with blood! And then——

ROSIE—Go on—!—*(Closing her eyes)*—And then destroy me with the kisses of his mouth!

*(Enter GILES from left, laden with boxes.)*

GILES—The bouquets, madam. Shall I leave them here?

MRS. STURGES—Thank you—just put them down.—*(He does so and EXITS.)*

MARY — *(Undoing the boxes)* — This must be Blanche's—oh, here's mine!—*(Taking out bouquet)*—How charming!

ANITA—*(At another box)*—These are ours! See how they match our gowns!

ROSIE—I never knew a man with taste like Nick's! —*(The three girls talk among themselves.)*

MRS. STURGES—*(To Egypt)*—Come here, Blanche,

and let me fix your skirt.—*(When Egypt comes up to her.)* —My dear, you *must not* talk the way you did just now! It's not nice, and it's not good form! You know you don't hear Rosie or Mary or Clara Field or Daisy Leonard or any of your young friends say such things, and we want our little Blanche to be as much like them as she possibly can! We want her to be a real sweet young girl!

EGYPT—*(Catching her veil on the top of a chair)* —God benge a dukko blast it to hell!

MRS. STURGES—What?

EGYPT—*(Turning sweetly)*—I just said I wish this veil wouldn't catch on every dam chair in the room!

MRS. STURGES—*(Angrily)*—Blanche, I forbid you to use such language!

EGYPT—But dad says it, whenever he's playing golf, and misses the ball.—*(Laughingly innocently)*—Oh, he says such *funny* things—he says, "God——

MRS. STURGES—*(Interrupting)*—It's quite different with your father. He's a man and you're well, we *hope* you're a lady!

EGYPT—*(Injured)*—Well, I hope so, too, Aunt Emma! How you talk! If you don't look out you'll hurt my feelings!—*(Pulling a cigarette case from her bosom and opening it)*—Have one—anybody?

MRS. STURGES—*(Tragically)*—My dear — not in your *wedding-dress!*

EGYPT—Don't fuss—I won't drop any ashes on it! —*(She sits down cross-legged on the floor.)*

MRS. STURGES—*(With a little scream)*—Oh—! Oh—! Take care—*Blanche!*

EGYPT—*(Pulling an old pack of cards from her bosom)*—It's all right, Aunt Emma—just for a minute!

MRS. STURGES—What is the name of——*(Seeing the cards)*—Blanche, you know your father's absolutely forbidden you to spend any more time on those silly tricks! And you promised him, too—I heard you only day before yesterday when——

EGYPT—*(Interrupting)*—It's no use, Aunt Emma. I've got to try the cards once more before I'm married!— *(She cuts and shuffles.)*

ROSIE—*(To Anita, coming up)* —What's she doing?

ANITA—Telling her fortune—*(They gather about her.)*

EGYPT—*(Dealing the cards)*—Seven— three nines— the ace of clubs—m.

ROSIE—What does that mean?

EGYPT—*(Without looking up)*—A dark visitor bringing news—*(She deals)*—The ten—the Jack — the Queen — the four — all spades — *spades*——

ANITA—What's that?

EGYPT—Suffering.—*(She deals)*—The nine of diamonds—the seven—the two—and now the last card—*(She turns it up.)*

ROSIE—The King of hearts!

ANITA—What does that mean?

EGYPT — *(With an effort)*—Love — or death. — *(Throwing away her cigarette, then looking straight before her)*—And the clouds are bloody in the west to-night —and my mirror broke when they put on my veil—*(With a sudden shiver)*—A-ah!

ANITA—What's the matter?

EGYPT—I remember—what I must forget.—*(Brief pause.)*

MARY—Try it over again.

EGYPT—*(Wearily)*—Why? It'll be just the same.

ROSIE—*(Incredulously)*—You don't mean it *always* comes out that way—?

EGYPT—*(With a shrug)*—Look and see!—*(Shuffling and dealing)*—The sevens and nines——

MRS. STURGES—*(Interested in spite of herself)*—But this time it's the ace of diamonds—!

EGYPT—That makes no difference.—*(Dealing)*—Four spades.

ANITA—How *weird!*

EGYPT—*(Dealing)*—The seven — the three — the nine — and—*(She hesitates before turning it.)*

ROSIE—*(Leaning over)*—Quick! Let's see!

LINDSEY—*(Entering from back)*—Well, what are you all so busy about?

EGYPT—*(Gathering together the cards quickly and concealing them)*—Oh, we're just talking about literature. We're wondering whether—er—oh—what's-his-name—*Bacon*—whether he wrote Shakespeare's plays! I think he did, myself.—*(Throwing her arms about his neck)*—Oh, daddy, you look so *handsome!*

LINDSEY—*(Tenderly)*—Little rascal — *(Suddenly)* —Blanche, you haven't been smoking, have you?

EGYPT—*(Innocently)*—No, dad. Why, you told me not to. Don't you remember?

LINDSEY—*(Whimsically)* — Yes, I thought *you*

might be the one to forget!—*(To Mrs. Sturges)*—Emma, the Bishop's here and wants to know where he's to put on his robes, the band's wavering between Wagner and Offenbach, and I saw Howard Cuyler's motor coming up the drive.—*(Saluting her)*—Now I've informed the boss, according to orders!

MRS. STURGES—*(Anxiously going toward back)*—Oh, dear, I suppose people will come early, because it looks like rain! Are those ushers ready? Oh, there's Mr. Wiggins!—*(Calling as she goes out back)*—Mr. Wiggins! Mr. Wiggins, would you find the bishop and take him up to the——

ANITA—*(To Rosie)*—Now we're going to practice once more! I *must* learn to glide like you Mary.

ROSIE—It's perfectly simple. Keep both feet glued to the ground!—*(She sings the Lohengrin march)—Now! —(She sings)*—Head up! Hips slightly back—that's right! *(She sings.)*

ANITA—Is my bouquet rig [illegible]

ROSIE—No—further up. And don't be so stiff! Just look perfectly simple and charming, the way *I* do—and *smile!—(She sings as they pass out the door—left—into the dining room.)*

MARY—*(Who has been looking at Egypt's arm)*—Why, Blanche! Isn't that—*(Coming closer)*—Just let me look!

EGYPT—*(Edging off nervously)*—What do you want?

MARY—*(Taking her arm)*—Yes—it is! I can tell by that little chipped place where I dropped it on the hearth.

EGYPT—What *are* you talking about?

MARY—*(Simply)*—My bracelet! Someone must have put it with your things.

EGYPT—*(Kindly)*—I'm afraid you're mixed up, Mary. This is *my* bracelet. You see it's made of lucky stones. I've had it all my life.

MARY—*(Looking at her)*—Are you sure?

EGYPT—*(Returning the look)*—Perfectly!—*(Pause.)*

MARY—*(Murmuring)*—Then of course—I was mistaken——

EGYPT—*(Generously)*—That's all right, dear. Everybody makes mistakes now and then.

MARY—*(Turning away)*—I'm sorry——

*(She EXITS—left—into dining room. Egypt skips*

*upto where her father is sitting, and perches on the arm of his chair.)*

EGYPT—*(Kissing the top of his head)*—Good old popover!

LINDSEY—Sit down, Blanche, I want to talk to you seriously. I want to——

EGYPT—*(Cooing as she interrupts)*—Dear old dad, why you're getting all bald—just like an ostrich egg!

LINDSEY—*(Annoyed)*—Stop mussing up my hair!

EGYPT—Oh, you naughty man! You never washed your ears this morning!

LINDSEY—*(More annoyed)*—Damn it all, I——

EGYPT—*(Quickly)*—No—don't move—don't swear! Just a second and I'll have it done!—*(She rolls her handkerchief over her finger, sticks it in her mouth, and prepares for the attack.)*

LINDSEY—*(Thundering)*—*Blanche—!*

EGYPT—*(Taking away her hand and speaking in a small voice of assumed terror)*—Yes, your honor?

LINDSEY—*(Softening)*—Stop wriggling for a minute, while I talk to you! You see, I couldn't sleep last night—some dam' stray dog was howling at the moon! And as I lay awake, all sorts of old, forgotten things kept coming to my mind—and so I thought I'd have a little chat with you to-day, and clear up everything for good and all.

EGYPT—What do you mean?

LINDSEY—*(Gently)*—Just tell me, de[illegible]re going to be happy with Nick.

EGYPT—Of course I am! What a funny question!

LINDSEY—And that you love him—very much indeed.

EGYPT—Of course I love him. He's so—very rich and pleasant and refined!

LINDSEY—And when you marry him you won't be homesick for—well you know?—*(Slight pause.)*

EGYPT—No, dad—of course I won't.

LINDSEY—*(Looking off)*—I could understand it if you were. You see I had a month of it myself—a whole month, after your mother found me senseless on the road. I used to lie all day in the wagon on two old patchwork quilts—and then at night she'd sing to me—the firelight used to make her eyes so bright! She wore one of those yellow things tied over her head, *you* know—and I ate my

stew out of an old tin plate. Good Lord, I can see the dents in it to-day!

EGYPT—*(After a pause)*—Well, dad, have you finished? Is that all?

LINDSEY—*(His thoughts returning)* — No, dear, there's one thing more.—*(With some hesitation)* — Those gypsy fellows. They were always hanging around, I suppose? And you were just a kid—why, it would have been so natural, if—*(He pauses.)*

EGYPT—If what?

LINDSEY—If—you'd *liked* one of them, I mean.—*(Slight pause.)*

EGYPT—*(Deliberately)*—But you see, dear—I didn't.

LINDSEY—*(Not looking at her)*—That dime you always wear around your neck—? Your mother gave me one just like it, I remember.

EGYPT—*(Laughing)*—You silly! It's just a cure for warts—that's all!

LINDSEY—*(Much relieved)*—Is it? Then I'm through. And I'm so glad there's nothing to distress you when you look back—oh, well, I suppose I'm an old fool, but, after all, this is your wedding day!—*(Looking up)*—Why, what's the matter, dear? You're crying!

EGYPT—*(Her arms about him sobbing)*—Oh, dad—you're just the—the *goodest* man God ever made!—*(She kneels before him, burying her head in his lap.)*

LINDSEY—*(Smiling down at her)*—Honest Injun? Will you do something to please me, then?

EGYPT—Oh, yes—what is it?

LINDSEY—*(Tenderly)*—Tell me the truth about Mary's bracelet.—*(Pause.)*

EGYPT—*(In a different tone, drawing away)* — *I* don't know anything about her old bracelet!

LINDSEY—*(Always tenderly)*—My dear, can't you trust me? Now didn't you just—*borrow* it, without asking leave, and—then there was the fuss about it's being lost—you were frightened—so you didn't speak up. Isn't that it?

EGYPT—*(Candidly)*—Cross my heart and hope to die if I know a thing about it!—*(She suits her action to her words.)*

LINDSEY—*(Coaxingly)*—Please, dear—just to me! I won't tell a single soul!

EGYPT—I*can't* say I told a lie when I *didn't!* That would be wrong!

LINDSEY—*(Half amused — half sad)* — Ah, but you've been wrong—so often!

EGYPT—*(Tearfully)*—Dad, you hurt me!

LINDSEY—I'm sorry, dear, I won't bother you any more.—*(In a detached tone, looking at the ceiling*—Only I saw such a stunning bracelet at Tiffany's the day before I left town—it was a band of diamonds with three huge emeralds on top—and I thought if this one *had* happened to be Mary's, I'd have bought that other for your birthday, however, there's no use discussing it, is there?

EGYPT—*(Who has listened greedily)*—Were they emeralds—by any chance—those big square ones that look like wonderful green glass?

LINDSEY—*(Carelessly)*—Yes, I believe they were—*(Rising)*—Well, I suppose I ought to be helping your Aunt Emma receive!—*(She has slowly slipped off the jade bracelet and now holds it out to him.)*

EGYPT—*(In a small voice)*—Dad!—*(He turns and sees it.)*

LINDSEY—My darling!—*(He catches her in his arms. The orchestra is heard in the next room beginning Wagner's "Traume." Nick, dressed in bridal finery, appears left, holding something carefully in both hands.)*

NICK—*(Gaily)*—Well, where do *I* come in on this?

LINDSEY—*(Releasing her quickly and blowing his nose)*—It's all right—I'm just going!—*(To Egypt—rather uncertainly)*—God bless you, little girl!

*(He EXITS at back. The sound of many voices off louder music can be heard as the doors open and shut.)*

NICK—*(Simply)*—Look what I have! It flew into my room upstairs when I was dressing.

EGYPT—*(Looking)*—A swallow!

NICK—What do you always call them—"Little children of the wind"?

EGYPT—*(Taking the bird into her own hands)*—All the rest have flown north long ago. They must have left this little one behind.

NICK—It lies so still—but can't you feel the wildness underneath?

EGYPT—*(With strange look in her eyes)*—Oh, Nick, she's telling me with every heart-beat that outdoors the spring has come!

NICK—Then let her go, my dear, don't keep her any more!

EGYPT—*(At window)*—Go home to the wind and

sky, little sister—good bye—good bye—*(She sets it free)*—She's gone—she's flying into the storm!—*(Turning, wildly, and impulsively to Nick)*—Oh, Nick, let *me* go, too!

NICK—What?

EGYPT—Don't hold me! Let me go!

NICK—You mean——

EGYPT—*(Interrupting)*—Yes, I mean it! Listen—I'll fall sick—we'll postpone the wedding—there's time yet—oh, Nick, there's time yet before it's all too late——!

NICK—*(Decidedly*—It's too late now.

EGYPT—Why?

NICK—Because I love you.

EGYPT—No——!

NICK—*(Still firmly)*—I love you and I've got to have you. I knew it when I saw you in the tents of Egypt—long ago!

EGYPT—Nick——!

NICK—*(Rather jerkily)*—You've done so much for me—you don't know! You're like a blaze of color to a man who thought he'd gone blind years ago—or sudden music in the dead of night——

EGYPT—*(Piteously)*—Oh, please——!

NICK—Everything had happened before I met you. I'd lived and died. Then you came—and I saw your gypsy eyes—and I rose up to a life I'd never dreamed of in the world! My dear, it was *resurrection*—resurrection—that's what it was!—and now you ask me to go back into my grave!

EGYPT—*(Wailing)*—What'll I do—oh, what'll I do?

NICK—*(Laughing)*—Listen— I'll tell you! You're going to marry me in about five minutes and then we'll spread our wings and fly out of this stupid little cage—we're going to fly off like those swallows in the springtime, and never come home again!

EGYPT—*(With a note of hope)*—Oh, Nick!

NICK—I'm going to give you everything you ever fancied on a summer's night! All the glories of the world—I'm going to drop them in your lap like jewels, one by one!

EGYPT—*(With a gasp)*—Oh!—oh! But I'm expensive! Dad told me once I—m——

NICK—*(Interrupting gaily)*—*I* don't care! What's the good of money unless you have someone to squander it on? We'll go to Paris first and I'll get you a wilderness of clothes—a new dress for every minute of the year! And

then the jewellers in the Rue de la Paix—we'll clean them out like burglars, you and I!

EGYPT—*(Tremuously)*—Oh, Nick—will you give me a long chain of big, *big* rubies—heavy—and red, like blood and wine—and fire?

NICK—Bushels of 'em, my dear—and diamonds—and a cataract of pearls—and fillets of sapphires set in platinum—and bracelet snakes with emerald eyes——

EGYPT—*(Delighted)*—Oh—! Oh—!

NICK—And after Paris we'll go south and have a crack at Monte Carlo. I always thought it was the dullest hole on earth, but now, by Jove, I'd rather like to see you play!

EGYPT—*(Breathless)*—I'll win—I know I'll win!

NICK—And then my yacht'll meet us at Marseilles and we'll go cruising off the coast of Italy—we'll take a palace somewhere——

EGYPT—*(More and more excited, as she interrupts)*—A palace with a hundred rooms!

NICK—*(Smiling)*—Ah, yes—and a hundred doors!

EGYPT—*(Clapping her hands)*—You always understood—you always knew!

NICK—And we'll fill it full with silver and glass and gold—marble, all the colors of the sea! and what d'you call it? Jacynth and gates of pearl!

EGYPT—Oh, Nick—!

NICK—*(Always smiling)*—We'll have the tree of life growing in our garden—and pomegranates and figs—orchids and moss-roses—the fountains playing champagne the livelong day——

EGYPT—*(Ecstatically)*—And way up in the trees we'll hear the singing of the birds of Paradise!

NICK—Yes, but we won't stay there—we'll wander on to Greece and Egypt——

EGYPT—*(Under her breath)*—Egypt—!

NICK—We'll have you floating down the river—good Lord! like another Cleopatra, with an Anthony in trousers to hold your little hand! And then some night we'll ride for miles and miles—out into the desert—and pitch our tents and sleep there with the stars like big lamps in the sky!

EGYPT—*(Intoxicated)—Nick!*

NICK—*(Turning to her with a challenge in his voice)*—Now what do you say? Now what?

EGYPT—I don't know—my head's swimming——

NICK—*(Softly)*—Egyptian sorceress!

EGYPT—All the glories of the world—oh, Nick—you promised!

NICK—*(Gathering her to him)*—Little serpent of old Nile——

EGYPT—*(Faintly)*—Don't, Nick—please—not now.

NICK—*(Between his teeth)*—You've stung me and you've made me young again!

*(He kisses her with a touch of passion. It grows darker outside. There is a quiver of lightning, followed by a slight rumble of thunder. Mrs. Komello appears at the window outside and looks in. Egypt sees her over Nick's shoulder and shrieks aloud.)*

NICK—*(Quickly)*—What's the matter?

EGYPT—Look——

MARY—*(Appearing quickly from left)*—Blanche!

ROSIE—*(Coming in hurriedly from left, followed by Anita)*—What's happened?

NICK—*(Quietly)*—There's someone at the window—

ANITA—Good heavens!

MARY—Where?

NICK—It's just an old woman. She frightened Blanche.

MARY—Who is she?

NICK—God knows. A gypsy, I think.—*(To Mrs. Komello, who has now come around to the door.)*—What are you doing there ? What do you want?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(In her cracked old voice)*—Your honor, I smell rain and I'm looking for shelter.

NICK—Where do you belong?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Curtseying)*—On the road, at your honor's service.

NICK—Well, move along. Mr. Lindsey doesn't allow gypsies on his place. Didn't you see the notice?—*(Mrs. Komello cringes.)*

MARY—*(Coming forward)*—But there *is* a storm coming up!—*(To Mrs. Komello)*—Where are your friends? Surely you're not wandering about by yourself?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Blinking)*—God keep you safe, dearie! I'm a lone old woman and I've got no friends at all!

NICK—But where are you going?

MRS. KOMELLO—Wherever the stars may lead. And if your honor will give me no corner to rest my head, then so much the worse for my old bones, with rheumatism in all

their joints, God blast 'em!—*(Another rumble of thunder, far away.)*

MARY—*(impulsively)*—Nick, we can't let her go off this way?—Poor old thing!

NICK—Ring for Giles, then, and we'll have her put in the laundry. I don't suppose she'll want to steal the soap.

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Stepping in)*—May Egypt's blessing light upon your honor's head! And while I'm waiting, shall I tell your fortunes?

ROSIE—*(Timidly)*—Do you know how?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Softly)*—Lord, listen to the pretty lady! As if I'd done anything else for a hundred years!

ANITA—*(To Nick, enthusiastically)*—Oh, let her do it to you and Blanche!

ROSIE—*Think* how romantic!

ANITA—Oh, Nick,—you must—you've *got* to!

ROSIE—We won't help you get married if you don't!

NICK—But Mr. Lindsey wouldn't like it and——

ROSIE—*(Interrupting)*—Why, it wouldn't take a minute, would it, Mary?

ANITA—And I *know* Mr. Lindsey won't mind!

ROSIE—*(Gaily)*—Come on! The bride first! Ready, Blanche!

EGYPT—*(Shrinking)*—No—not to-day——

ANITA—But you must—that's why we got her in!

EGYPT—I'm sorry—no, I can't——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(To Egypt)*—Ah, don't be afraid of the poor old gypsy woman, but show her your palm, little rose of the Nile, and I'm sure you'll hear some things you want to know.

EGYPT—I—I don't want to hear anything.

ROSIE—Go on, Blanche.

ANITA—Please——!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Caressingly)*—Little fiery flower! —*(She has sidled up and now takes the girl's hand, softly and tenderly. She looks at it.)*

ROSIE—Well? Tell us the worst!

ANITA—Don't leave anything out.

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Lifting her head)*—What I see here I must say to the little lady all alone.

EGYPT—*(Instinctively)*—No—oh, Nick!

ANITA—*(Laughing)*—As bad as that? Brace up, my dear!

ROSIE—*(To Mary)*—Come along—we'll go in the dining room.

MARY—I'll get the old lady something to eat.

ANITA—*(To Egypt)*—Don't forget anything, now! —*(She and Mary go out.)*

ROSIE—*(At door)*—Nick!

NICK—*(To Egypt)*—You don't mind—all this, do you?

EGYPT—Oh, no, dear—so long as they want to be silly, *I* don't mind.

NICK—*(Pleased)*—That's right. Let me know when it's my turn.—*(He EXITS left. Mrs. Komello makes a sudden movement towards Egypt.)*

EGYPT—*(Her eyes on the door)*—No—wait!—*(She goes over and locks it silently and quickly. Then turns with abandon to Mrs. Komello.)*—*Gan-bebee!*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(With low, fierce tenderness)*—*Egypt!* Little sweetheart! Meerie tawnie chi.—*(She takes the girl in her arms and caresses her as an old lioness would her cub.)*

EGYPT—*(Faintly)*—Gran-bebee——

MRS. KOMELLO—God bless you, little daughter—sarishan ryor—O baro duvel atch pa leste!

EGYPT—*(Very faintly)*—Gran-bebee—don't——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Hungrily)*—So—let me look at you. Little darling! Oh, the beautiful silk dress—you're wearing!—*(She fingers it curiously)*—And this—all white—like a mist at dawn!—*(She touches the veil)*—And the beads—and earrings! Lord—Lord! That I should live to see my little bird so fine!

EGYPT—What are you doing here?

MRS. KOMELLO—I am sent by the chief.

EGYPT—Old Faro?—*(In sudden terror)*—Where is he?

MRS. KOMELLO—Sweetheart, the devil is eating him.

EGYPT—*(Gasping)*—*Dead—?*

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Piously)*—And buried these three months, God be praised!

EGYPT—*(Trembling)*—And the chief—?

MRS. KOMELLO—When the father lies under the leaves, the son rides on his horses. When the old one's grave was full we scattered our fires and turned our backs upon the setting sun and travelled for a hundred days to take our Egypt once more to our breaking hearts!

EGYPT—*(In terror)*—No—don't——

MRS. KOMELLO—You saw the pattern—the trushel on the grass below your windows!

EGYPT—Yes—I saw.

MRS. KOMELLO—*He* made it when the clouds put out the moon. My daughter, why did you not obey his sign and come?

EGYPT—*(Suddenly)*—Oh, I'm afraid—I'm afraid!——

MRS. KOMELLO—There's nothing to fear. The old dog's dead. A man is waiting for his wedding night—that is my message, sweetheart.

EGYPT—No!

MRS. KOMELLO—He is your master—he is your rom!

EGYPT—No, I've forgotten him——

MRS. KOMELLO—A Romany chi forget her chal!

EGYPT—I'm not a gypsy—any more!

MRS. KOMELLO—Sweetheart, you lie! You're one of us—the stars and earth have said it! Quick!—what answer shall I take him?

EGYPT—Tell him, gran-bebee—that I am nothing to him and he is nothing to me. Tell him we travelled a short way together, but our paths soon led apart. Tell him if he waits—he will wait forever. Tell him—I wish him well.

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Grimly)*—Could I face a bridegroom with words like those? No, sweetheart, you can say them yourself!

EGYPT—*(Recoiling)*—Me?

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Pointing with her stick)*—He's out there—under the stars—

EGYPT—*(With a cry)*—Out there—!

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Passionately)*—And I'll tell him to come and drag you from this house if he tears your arms from your body and your hair from your head!

EGYPT—*(Fiercely)*—He can't—they'd kill him first——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(Hobbling swiftly to the door)*—He can—he will——

EGYPT—*(In sudden terror)* — Don't — for God's sake—*gran-bebee*——

MRS. KOMELLO—*(At door)*—Ah, you may forget us gypsies, little sweetheart—but we never forget you—no, we never have and we never will, till the sun has set for the very last time and the great swallows all——

*(She disappears into the night. Egypt stands for a moment, rigid with terror. There is a burst of laughter from the next room—left. With a cry, she rushes to the door, unlocks and opens it. She stands clinging to the handle, panting, and finally begins to laugh in hysterical relief.)*

EGYPT—*(As she opens the door)*—Nick! *Nick!*

NICK—*(From within)*—My turn? All right, I'll—*(He appears smiling, then sees her)*—Good Lord, Blanche! *(She clutches him, gulping and unable to speak.)*

ROSIE—*(Coming in with a bottle of champagne and a glass)*—Nonsense! It'll do her good!

MARY—*(Appearing with a plate)*—I wonder if she'll want more than three croquettes—

ANITA—*(Also with plate)*—Oh, no, I've got some lobster salad and a whole lot of French peas—*(Looking about)*—Why, where is she?

ROSIE—*(Looking about)*—*I* don't know.

MARY—She must have gone!

EGYPT—*(Beginning to laugh hysterically)*—Champagne—croquettes—*French peas*——

MARY—My dear!

ANITA—What is it?

ROSIE—What's the matter?

EGYPT—*(Controlling herself)*—Oh, n-nothing—*(To Nick who helps her towards sofa)*—I want you to help me.

NICK—*(Quietly)*—I will. Sit down while I bring you a glass of sherry.

EGYPT—*(Clinging to him)*—No, don't leave me! I want to get married now—this very minute—*(As Lindsey appears at back)*—Oh, dad! I'm so glad you've come—are they ready? Oh, tell them to get ready—I can't wait any more—I can't—I *can't*—

LINDSEY — *(Interrupting her)* — Hark! What's that?—*(There is silence, through which a man's voice is heard singing in the garden.)*

VOICE—When the world ends I shall die—
And so till then, wherever I am,
I'll love my Romany Chi!

*(Egypt puts her arms about Nick's neck.)*

MARY—*(Who has gone quietly to the window)*—There's a man standing by the fountain. I think—it's another gypsy.

LINDSEY—*Another*—? Why, what do you——

MARY—*(Interrupting in a little fright)*—Oh, he's

coming—he's coming up here!—*(She shrinks away to where the rest are standing. There is an instant's pause, then Faro appears silently at the door. He bows politely, but gravely—and then sees Egypt.)*

FARO—*(To her commandingly)*—Hatch till the dood wells apre.

EGYPT—*(Whispering)*—Mi diri Datcha!

FARO—Maude rak tute!

EGYPT—*(As before)*—Ave—avali!

LINDSEY—Blanche!

EGYPT—Yes, dad!

LINDSEY—What's he saying to you?

EGYPT—He's—asking for money.

LINDSEY—And what did you tell him?

EGYPT—I—said we never gave at the door.

LINDSEY—That's right—*(To Faro, sternly)*—Now, my man, what do you mean by coming into my garden? Didn't you see the sign at the gate? "No tramps or gypsies allowed on this place"? Don't you dare make any excuses! It's as plain as day! Now get a move on, clear out this minute! And if ever you show your face around here I'll have you locked up for trespassing—understand?

FARO—I heard there was a wedding here to-day. I only came to wish the bride good luck!

EGYPT—*(Shrilly)*—No—no—keep away!

FARO—Would the gorgio lady from whose mouth the Romany words drop like pieces of silver and gold—would she take a present from one of the black quarry on her wedding-day?

EGYPT—*(In terror)*—Nick, don't let him

FARO—Laugh and be happy in your husband's arms, my lady, and lay this with a gypsy's blessing on your bed to-night!—*(With a proud, free gesture he tosses at her the handkerchief she gave him in Act I, which, done up in an old piece of newspaper, he has taken from an inside pocket.)*

EGYPT—*(Shrinking as it falls at her feet)*—Oh! Oh!

NICK—*(Harshly, as he comes forward)*—Blanche—you don't—*know* this man!—*(There is a pause. Egypt controls herself with a supreme effort.)*

EGYPT—*(Looking Faro in the eyes)*—I never saw him in my life before!—*(There is a rumble of thunder in the distance.)*

FARO—*(Moving a step nearer)*—Look in my face, pretty lady—look and think again!

EGYPT—What do you mean?

FARO—*(With another step)*—Do you smell the brandy, spilt where the fires are burning? Do you hear the singing of the marriage song?

EGYPT—*(Facing him)*—No.

FARO—Do you feel the kiss a young chal gave you when he said good bye?

EGYPT—*(Holding her ground)*—No.

*(Lindsey and Nick speak together.)*

LINDSEY—What the devil——

NICK—Get him away—he's making her——

FARO—*(Very close to her)*—Do you see a man who's waited years for his wedding-night?

EGYPT—*(Suddenly bristling and spitting like a cat)*—I see a gypsy dog and give him *that!—(She strikes him across the face.)*

FARO—*(With a yell, seizing her and throwing her to her knees)*—A-ah! You liar, you're my woman still—my blood's on your forehead, you can never wash it away—my woman, d'you hear? *My woman till the judgment day!*

*(He is shaking her backwards and forwards, snarling like an animal. She makes no sound. The bridesmaids have shrunk away with little screams of terror. Lindsey and Nick are trying to pull him off, and finally succeed.)*

LINDSEY—*(Quietly)*—Hold his head——

NICK—Ring the bell, Mary.

ANITA—*(Bending over Egypt, who kneels motionless and silent where Faro left her.)*—Blanche!

ROSIE—*(In sudden terror)*—Oh! There's blood on her dress!

MARY—*(Quietly)*—His arm was hurt. That's all.

*(ENTER GILES from left.)*

GILES—*(To Lindsey, after a moment of petrification)*—The sheriff, sir, and half a dozen men. They're after—why, that must be him there!

LINDSEY—*(Without turning)*—Quick! — bring 'em along!

FARO—*(Freeing his head and facing Egypt)*—Listen, you gorgio half-breed—d'you think I want you?—d'you think I love you? No, by God, you can stay here and marry the devil himself and dance in hell for the rest of your life!—*(With a desperate effort, he tears himself from Lindsey and Nick, and dashes out the window-door—right—into the growing darkness.)*

LINDSEY—*(As Faro frees himself)*—Damnation!

NICK—*(At the window)*—He's gone——

*(Just here the Sheriff and his little posse—dressed for action—come in from left, hats in hand.)*

SHERIFF—Sorry to bothah you, suh, but we'ah aftah a gypsy man. We saw him come up yo' drive an'—

LINDSEY—*(Interrupting)*—What's he done?

SHERIFF—Done—? Why, he's the fellah that killed Jim Harris—stabbed him with a six-inch knife in the Main Street, bah. Jim shot him in the arm befo' he died, but the dam' snake got away. So we made a posse and took the dawgs an' now we'ah a-goin' to run that mu'derah down if it——

EGYPT—*(Interrupting him and throwing up her hands with a cry)*—A-ah!

SHERIFF—Have you seen him, suh?

LINDSEY—A tall fellow with black hair and brass earrings?

SHERIFF—That's him, suh, was he heah?

LINDSEY—*(Briefly)*—Got away through that window not a minute ago!

SHERIFF—*(Quickly)*—He didn't leave nothin' behind we could give to the dawgs? Not a hat, nor a piece o' his clo'es?

LINDSEY—No, I don't think——

NICK—*(Interrupting him)*—What about that handkerchief he threw at Blanche? It came from his inside pocket—over his heart!

*(Egypt seizes the handkerchief where it lies before her.)*

SHERIFF—*(His eyes on the door)*—If you give it to me quick, suh, we won't bothah you no more.

NICK—Let's have it, Blanche.

EGYPT—*(Instinctively pressing it to her bosom)*—No—no!

LINDSEY—Come, dear—the sheriff's waiting.

EGYPT—*(Desperately)*—No, I won't!

LINDSEY—*(Sternly)*—Blanche, I'm speaking to you!

EGYPT—*(Passionately)*—I don't care—it's mine—it's mine, I tell you, and I'll die before I give it to those dogs!

NICK—You knew him—you knew him all the time!

EGYPT—*(Terrified)*—No—no! God blast me if I ever saw his face before to-night!

NICK—*(Holding out his hand)*—Then give me that handkerchief!

EGYPT—*(Frantically)*—There! Take it quick!—*(Nick takes it and gives it to the Sheriff)*—And good luck to your hunting, sir—good luck!

SHERIFF—Thanks, ma'am. With this, we'll have him locked up befo' midnight, sho'!—*(To one of his deputies)*—Tom, fetch round the dawgs from that side o' the house.—*(To his men)*—Come on—*(Just here the two ushers ENTER from back.)*

HARRY STREET—*(Calling down)*—All ready? The music's waiting for the signal.—*(Seeing the Sheriff and his men run out right)*—Why—what's wrong?

NICK—*(Hurriedly)*—Nothing. Just wait a second, please, till I get on my job.

*(He EXITS quickly left. The two ushers pick up the piles of white ribbon lying on the steps at back and, holding them over one arm, unwind them as they disappear into the rooms beyond. The electric light pours through the open doors and, with the ribbons, gives the illusion of an aisle. Meanwhile.)*

MARY—*(To Egypt, quietly)*—Stand up, dear, quick—I have just time to fix your veil.—*(She raises Egypt to her feet and lowers the veil over her face.)*

ROSIE—*(To Egypt)*—Now don't move—I'll arrange your train.

ANITA—*(Giving her, her bride's bouquet)*—Here are your flowers, dear—have you got them? You must hold them *so!*—*(The bridesmaids have gathered tenderly and busily about her.)*

LINDSEY — *(Buttoning his glove)* — Now, little daughter——

EGYPT—*(Bursting out)*—Dad, I don't want to be married!

LINDSEY—*(Quickly)*—S-sh! Nonsense! Take my arm!

EGYPT—No, it's true—I'm afraid—oh, I'm terribly *afraid*——

HARRY STREET—*(Appearing with a smile at back)*—All right?

LINDSEY—*(Between his teeth)*—Yes. Go ahead.

*(Harry nods to the musicians inside the room at back. The hum of voices beyond stops suddenly. Outside it grows very black. The wedding march begins.)*

EGYPT—*(More loudly)*—I don't want to be married

—I won't be married—I won't—I won't——*(She drops her bouquet to the floor and is turning away when her father seizes her.)*

LINDSEY—*(Whispering vehemently to Harry and Clip)*—Move along—dam' you, what are you waiting for?

*(Just as the procession, galvanized to action, starts slowly towards the door at back, there is a flash of lightning at the windows, followed by a loud clap of thunder, dying away and lost mid ominous rumblings.)*

EGYPT—*(Hysterically, as she struggles to get away)*—Stop it!—let me go! Please—daddy, don't make me marry him—don't—*Oh, don't, for the love of God!*

*(Her voice rises to a howl—he puts his hand over her mouth and almost drags her along towards the steps at back as the curtain swiftly falls.)*

*CURTAIN.*

# Act 3

SCENE.

Mrs. Van Kleet's bedroom in her husband's house—"The Crossways." It is luxurious and beautiful, and complete. To back-centre, up two steps is a large triple window with elaborate lace-end-satin curtains now drawn. To right, very far down, is a door leading into Nick's room. Below this—right-centre—is a shallow alcove containing the canopied bed, placed at right angles to the wall. At its foot, thus jutting out into the room, is a brocaded couch, covered with cushions. Near this is a small table with magazines, books, and a big electric lamp, frivolously shaded. To left of window, across the corner of the room, is the low dressing table, covered with gold boxes, etc., lighted by side brackets, a chair before it. On left wall, just below this, a door opens off into the dressing room and bath. Below this the fire-place, with elaborate clock and ornaments. Before the fire-place, near front, is the door to hall and rest of house. The electric lamps are all turned on. A soft, warm light suffuses the room. Outside occasional mutters of thunder are heard. The storm brewing in the last act is about to break.

As the curtain rises, Louise, Egypt's trim, careful maid, is taking some things from a trunk placed at right—between bed and door. She is also unpacking two bags. There is a travelling dress thrown over a chair, a big hat on the table, etc. Below a woman's voice is heard singing to a piano accompaniment.

Just after the curtain has risen there is a knock at door—left—and it immediately opens. A rather pretty house-maid backs in, holding open the door for someone else.

HOUSEMAID—That's right—come along—*(Turning and seeing Louise.)*—Oh, it's you, miss! The footmen's just bringing in the supper table—if you don't mind.

*(Two footmen appear, carrying a small supper-table. They put it down carefully, bring in several dishes—a chafing dish among them—for outside and put them all on the table.*

LOUISE—Did Miss Blanche—Mrs. Van Kleet, I mean——

HOUSEMAID—*(Interrupting)*—No, it was Mr. Van Kleet ordered it. They'll be up right away. Mr. Wenham—he's the butler—says she never ate a single mite o' dinner! I expect he'll coax her later on himself. O' course being married *does* sort o' take your appetite away! —*(To the footman)*—Put it down there, by the fire.—*(Turning again to Louise)*—Kind o' nervous, is she, to-night?

LOUISE—*(Shaking out a skirt, and speaking discreetly)*—Just a little.

HOUSEMAID—It's always hard coming to a strange place, *I* think—let alone as a bride. That's why he had a fire burning, and all the flowers, and magazines and poetry books—he spent two hours a-choosing 'em himself!—*(To the footman)*—Don't forget the champagne, now, or you'll catch it good!

FOOTMAN—*(Loftily)*—Miss Trotter, I'm not in the 'abit of forgetting!—*(To Louise)*—Good night, miss.

LOUISE—*(Looking up)*—Oh, good night.—*(The footmen go out—left.)*

HOUSEMAID—*(As the door closes)*—Lord! How I hate an Englishman! Is that her singing downstairs?

LOUISE—*(Listening for a moment)*—Yes, that's her.

HOUSEMAID—I'll open the window for a minute—the music-room's just underneath.

LOUISE—What was this before he did it over?

HOUSEMAID—A library. You wouldn't believe it—would you?—*(She opened the window and the singing is heard more distinctly)*—Sounds sort o' gay, down there!

LOUISE—She likes it gay.

HOUSEMAID—*(As the song ends, amid a growl of thunder)*—Listen to that! It's going to be an awful night! —*(Turning to the dressing table)*—Oh, there's the gold toilet set he had a-waiting for her! Wasn't that grand of him?

LOUISE—He certainly is very kind and thoughtful. —*(She takes out a night-gown case from the bag.)*

HOUSEMAID—*(Coming up)*—Is that her night-gown? Let me look.—*(Examining it)*—Oh—oh! Goodness! How thin! I don't see how it holds up the embroidery!—*(She goes to the door and returns with a bucket containing ice and a bottle of champagne, which she puts beside the table.)*

LOUISE—*(Proudly)*—Direct from Paris — like

everything else.—*(She puts it on the bed)*—Beautiful sheets you have here!

HOUSEMAID—He's that particular about his linen. —*(As Louise picks up the dress and hat, and goes towards door—right)*—Wait—where are you going! That's *his* room! Her closets are all in there—between the dressing room and bath. The light turns on by itself as you open the door.—*(She points to second door—left.)*

LOUISE—*(Going out)*—Thanks—I'll get it straight in time.

*(The housemaid, humming a little tune, has placed a silver vase of flowers on the table and is lighting the candles as Nick, dressed in a dinner jacket, opens the door—left —and holds it for Egypt.)*

NICK—*(To Egypt—outside)*—This way, my dear.—*(Looking at his watch)*—Good Lord! It's half past eleven! —*(Egypt comes in slowly. She is in evening dress, is rather pale and tries hard not to seem nervous.)*

EGYPT—*(Hanging back at the door)*—That's early, Nick! Come on, let's go downstairs—I'll sing to you some more!

NICK—*(Smiling)*—I've had enough for once—young nightingale!

HOUSEMAID—I beg pardon, sir—shall I open the champagne?

NICK—No, I'll do that. Good night. And take away some of these flowers. They make a sleeping room so close.

HOUSEMAID—*(Obeying him)*—Very well, sir. Good night.—*(To Egypt as she passes her)*—I beg pardon, madam.—*(She goes out—left. Again it thunders.)*

EGYPT—Listen to the thunder! Oh, Nick, I'll tell you what we'll do—we'll go out for a long, long walk, and—and hunt for mushrooms!

NICK—*(Laughing)*—We won't do anything of the sort! Come in and shut that door.—*(As she closes it, Louise re-enters from dressing room—left.)*

LOUISE—*(Seeing them)*—Oh, I beg your pardon, miss! I've just been putting away your suit. I don't suppose you'll need me any more?

EGYPT—*(Almost running over to hear and taking her arm as if for protection)*—Oh, yes, I will! You musn't go, Louise—don't—not now!—*(Her tone is more of an entreaty than order.)*

NICK—*(Bantering her playfully, yet tenderly)*—Oh, I don't think we ought to keep Louise up any longer.

Can't you trust a mere husband to unhook your dress? Give him a chance to be useful—the sooner you break him in, the better!—*(To Louise, in a lower tone)*—That'll do, Louise, you can go.

LOUISE—*(Smiling)*—Good night, sir.—*(To Egypt)*—Good night, Miss Blanche—I mean—shall I bring up your tea at eight?

NICK—*(Answering for Egypt)*—Yes—that'll be time enough. The train goes at ten-five.

EGYPT—*(Instinctively)*—Louise—!

LOUISE—*(At door)*—Good night.—*(She goes out quietly. Egypt turns and goes to the window where she stands looking out.)*

NICK—I suppose the rest of your trunks are downstairs? We don't want them to be late and miss connections with the New York boat!—*(She does not move)*—A penny for your thoughts, my dear!

EGYPT—*(Without turning)*—I wonder if they've caught that gypsy yet!—*(There is another and louder rumble of thunder.)*

NICK—*(Going to her and putting his arm about her waist)*—I don't know—and I really don't much care! Come and have a bite of supper and a glass of champagne—just to please me! If you don't you'll starve—and I'd hate to lose my wife just now!

EGYPT—I'm—I'm not hungry, Nick.

NICK—*(Gaily)*—You sit down here and open your mouth and swallow everything I give you—understand? —*(He puts her in a chair facing right, towards window. Then looks about among the dishes)*—Let's see what's in the chafing dish!—*(Opens it)*—Ah! Sweetbreads Magyar! I bought the recipe from the cook at a tiny inn near Budapesth. She always mashed the potatoes with her big, bare feet—that adds a *je ne sais quoi* that *my* chef never can achieve! Now for the fizz!—*(He begins opening it in a practical manner)*—This is Poubelle d'Or, '93. My last bottle, too. I've been saving it for a time like this.—*(Filling her glass)*—I always love to pour champagne—it's the Fountain of Youth—or all that's left of it, I fear! Now what shall our first toast be?—*(He stands opposite her, holding his glass and smiling)*—I know! The little beggar that's hiding in this room to-night. Stand up and drink to him, my dear!

EGYPT—*(Rising obediently)*—Who's that?

NICK—Why, Love. Who could it be but Love! Just

listen—and you'll hear the beating of his wings!—*(They stand with glasses raised—motionless.)*

EGYPT—*(Suddenly)*—What's that outside? Wait—there it is again.

NICK—*(After a moment)*—Only the calls of the quail, I think—why—Blanche! What is it?—*(She has dropped her glass with a crash and staggers suddenly.)*

EGYPT—*(Controlling herself)*—N-nothing—nothing at all Give me your glass!—*(She takes it)*—To love, Nick—to our love!—*(She drinks, then shivers)*—How cold it is!

NICK—Shall I put another stick of driftwood on the fire?

EGYPT—No—it's just the wine, I'm all right now. I want some salad, dear, and—are those truffles there?

NICK—*(Serving her)*—Yes—a little pâté, too?

EGYPT—*(Greedily)*—Oh, lots of it! I'm hungry now. How *nice* of you to think of supper here!

NICK—*(Smiling)*—I thought you'd change your mind!

EGYPT—*(Gaily and nervously)*—Sit down and eat something yourself. Now——!—*(Impulsively)*—Oh, Nick—do you realize that we're *married?*

NICK—I'm doing my best, but—Well, it *does* seem a little queer!

EGYPT—It's sweet—that's what it is! Oh, Nick, I've thought of such a funny thing!—*(She looks at him.)*

NICK—Well, aren't you going to let me in?

EGYPT—Wouldn't it be a joke if he were out there somewhere—near our house?

NICK—He——?

EGYPT—That gypsy—stupid!

NICK—*(Disappointed)*—Oh, Lord!

EGYPT—Well, we're only ten miles from the Bungalow. And he's been running—running seven hours!

NICK—They've probably caught him long ago. That handkerchief of yours was just the thing they needed. A little more champagne, my dear?

EGYPT—*(Holding her glass)*—But wouldn't it be funny if he were in the garden now—watching the light here in our window—wondering what we were doing—*(Taking away her glass)*—That's enough, Nick—please!

NICK—*(Looking at her steadily)*—Poor devil—out there in the night and storm—while you and I—*(He sud-*

*denly seizes her hand, which lies on the table. She draws it quickly away.)*

EGYPT—*(Toying with her glass)*—Do you know, Nick, I have a feeling that all the gypsy wilderness in my heart will die the day that murderer is hanged!

NICK—*(Drily)*—Don't bother, dear—it won't!

EGYPT—*(Whispering)*—And then—and only then, I'll be all yours, Nick—all yours, my body and my soul!

NICK—*(In a low voice, looking at her coldly)*—Little wife—!—*(He rouses himself with an effort)*—Have you had enough salad? Another truffle? *(Looking at his watch and rising))*—By Jove, it's nearly twelve! You're looking tired, my dear—it's time you were in bed. You've had a long, hard day—*(He blows out the candle on the table.)*

EGYPT—*(Rising and shrinking)*—But I'm not sleepy, Nick—I—I want to look at all those magazines—I want to finish a story—I want—I——

NICK—*(With a tender little laugh)*—Come along—and I'll unhook your dress before I go into my room.

EGYPT—*(Hesitatingly)*—But, Nick—I——

NICK—*(Smiling)*—Don't be afraid, dear—I won't eat you.—*(She comes up to him slowly, but obediently, and turns her back. He bends down to examine the dress)*—Now let me see—*(He sniffs at her)*—U-um! What perfume do you use?

EGYPT—I don't know. Louise buys it—I just pour it on.

NICK—*(Busy with the hooks)*—I'm blest if I can find a single—oh, there they are, all nicely covered up. Now—take a big breath and hold it till I say "Let Go!"

EGYPT—*(Obeying)*—That right?

NICK—Yes, now keep it up. Oh, damn! I tore one off—I'm sorry !

EGYPT—*(Gasping)*—I can't —— *(Breathing)* — I couldn't hold it any more! I'll try again.—*(She takes another breath.)*

NICK—*(Very busy)*—Just a moment—we're on the home stretch—it's all right—*(Slight pause)*—There! I think I'll have to raise Louise's wages!—*(The dress falls about her feet, leaving her arms and shoulders bare.)*

EGYPT—*(Stepping out of it)*—Thank you, Nick, I ——*(He seizes her from behind in a gust of passion and holds her to him, his face furied against her shoulder. She cries and struggles to get away)*—Oh, don't—*please*——

NICK—*(Controlling himself quickly and letting her go)*—Did I frighten you? I beg your pardon, dear.

EGYPT—*(Still trembling)*—It's all right—only——

NICK—*(Who is breathing rather quickly)*—Do you want that window closed? I'm afraid the rain may come in later.

EGYPT—*(Her nerves jangled)*—No, leave it open. If you don't I'll suffocate.

NICK—All right.—*(Looking about room)*—You have everything you want? You's sure?

EGYPT—Yes—everything——

NICK—*(Very matter-of-fact)*—Then hurry up, my dear—don't dawdle.—*(He is at his door—right.)*

EGYPT—*(Piteously)—Oh, Nick——!*

NICK—*(Turning)*—What is it?

EGYPT—*(After a moment)*—Nothing——

NICK—*(Smiling)—Au revoir!*

*(He goes to his room and closes the door. She looks after him for a moment. Then, with a gesture of despair turns off the lights. The fire-light—all blue and red and green—flickers fitfully about the room. Big shadows hover across the walls and ceiling. Egypt is vaguely seen moving about. At last she emerges from behind the bed in her long, thin nightgown, through which the outline of her form can occasionally be seen. She stands by the fire taking out the pins from her hair—it falls over her shoulders, she begins to braid it for the night. Suddenly, from the silence outside, comes a long wailing bird-call. She stops as if petrified. It is heard again. She turns, goes softly to the window, and looks out fearfully. There is a silence. Then quickly she pulls down the window, draws the curtains, rushes over to the fire-place and falls on her knees.)*

EGYPT—*(In a low voice of hatred and fear)*—"As I prick my finger, I curse a nameless man. As the first drop falls, his feet grow very tired! As the second follows his blood runs very low! When a third has gone, his heart will beat no more. Boil, blood!—die man! Take him Devil—for the charm is done!"

*(As she finishes, the storm outside breaks at last, her voice rises to a scream, there is a long shiver of lightning between the folds of the curtains, a rip of thunder and then Faro pushes aside the lace hangings and enters from the shattered window. The rain falls, the curtains are blown in, a chair is overturned. Faro is in the last stages of*

*exhaustion—his face is livid, his eyes wild, his clothing is torn and muddy. Egypt, turns, sees him, springs to her feet, and crouches against the wall. The Lightning and thunder continues furiously through the first part of the following scene.)*

EGYPT—Go away—go away——

FARO—*(Holding on to the chair for support and panting heavily)*—Egypt—for God's sake——

EGYPT—*(Coming forward)*—The dogs—d'you know they're after you!

FARO—Yes—I know——

EGYPT—Then why have you come here?

FARO—I love you——

EGYPT—*(Retreating)*—No—keep away—don't come near me!

FARO—*(With a groan)*—Heart of my heart — where are you—I can't——*(He falls fainting at her feet. She, terrified, listens at Nick's door a moment, hesitates, finally kneels by him and raises his head.)*

EGYPT—*(Softly and quickly)*—Faro—*(He does not answer)*—Faro—*Faro——!—(In sudden terror)*—Oh, dear God! —*(She bends her head and listens to his heart, then quickly rises, goes to the table, pours out a glass of champagne, kneels and makes him drink.)*

EGYPT—There—drink that!

FARO—*(Slowly recovering consciousness, then starting suddenly)*—The dogs—they're on me—I must cross the river—quick! Oh, God!—I can't—I can't.

EGYPT—*(Soothingly)*—It's all right—you're here—you're safe!

FARO—*(Looking at her)*—Egypt——?

EGYPT—Yes, it's Egypt—your arms' bleeding. That's why you look so pale.

FARO—*(Feebly)*—He shot me when I killed him.

EGYPT—I know. Don't move.—*(She hunts for something to use as a bandage, remembers her night dress, leans over, begins tearing strips along the hem)*—Now—let me look when the lightning flashes.—*(It lightens. Then, with a sharp intake of breath)*—A-ah! It's a bad job—I think the bullet scraped the bone!—*(She busies herself with the bandage.)*

FARO—D'you remember the last time you bound up my arm?

EGYPT—*(Briefly—as she works*—No.

FARO—After I caught you by the hair [illegible] rick, and you bit me till the blood ran down my face?

EGYPT—Don't talk until I've finished—*(Thunder and lightning in the pause)*—There! It's the best I can do! You'll feel better now.

FARO—*(Struggling to rise)*—Yes, just to see you is like brandy in my mouth!—*(He reels suddenly)* A-ah!

EGYPT—What is it?

FARO—*Steadying himself)*—I've had no food since dawn.

EGYPT—*(Pointing to the table)*—[illegible] and eat.

FARO—Where?—*(Sees the table and [illegible] it.)*

EGYPT—*(Nervously)*—But hurry—[illegible] time to lose! Just take what you need and go!—*He [illegible] where she sat before and eats with his fingers, [illegible] animal tossing up his jaws—drinking champagne [illegible] etc. As he eats and drinks his strength [illegible] She is listening again at Nick's door.)*

FARO—*(Gloating over her as he eats)*—You're changed, sweetheart—you've grown white and soft. [illegible] face is like the ashes of a fire that's gone—*(Laughing)* But what do I care? You're my wild bird still! Maduvalesse—maude rake tute!

EGYPT—*(Terrified)*—Be quiet—don't talk so loud!

FARO—I cut the pattern three times below your window—and when you never came I think my heart beat slow. I sent the old one with a message, but you never bowed your head—and my flesh shook! Down there—among the gorgios—you looked me in the eyes and lied—but I understood! They were between us—listening. And yet my blood turned cold. It's cold now—Egypt—Egypt, let me warm it on your burning breast.—*(He has risen and now comes towards her.)*

EGYPT—No—don't——

FARO—*(Swaying a little as he walks)*—The old dog's dead! A man is waiting for his wedding night——

EGYPT—*(Pointing with sudden fierceness to the door of Nick's room)*—I know! He's there. So go away before he comes in to his bride!

FARO—I'm going—and you're going with me! Look—the storm is with us! See how it flames. There's blood in the sky to-night.

EGYPT—*(Looking at him)*—All I see, Faro Black, is the blood upon your guilty hands!

FARO—Quick, little rawnie! The rain's ending and

we need it to wash away our scent! We'll climb down the vine—it's good and thick—we'll be in camp when the moon comes out—these country police, they can find their mouths when they drink whiskey, but they never can find *me!* I'm waiting! Come! Why don't you come?

EGYPT—You fool, can't you see? I've forgotten you—I've forgotten you ever lived! You've passed out of my mind like dreams at waking—yes, like ghosts at dawn——

FARO—*(Interrupting loudly)*—*Egypt*——

EGYPT—*(Looking quickly at Nick's door)*—S-sh!—*(Then with concentrated scorn)*—What name is that?

FARO—It's the name we've always called you by. You'll hear it last in the mouth of Death himself.

EGYPT—*(Contemptuously)*—I'm not a gypsy—any more.

FARO—That's a lie—hunkni—you'll be whipped for it to-morrow until you howl for mercy. You're a Romany chi—you're my wife—married to me four years ago by Romany law——

EGYPT—*(Laughing)*—Married—! Why, I've never seen you in my life before to-night—*(Through her teeth)*—You're just a tramp—a common tramp who's broken into my room—a dirty animal who stabs men in saloons——

FARO—*(Interrupting fiercely)*—He said it was your wedding day. He laughed and took another drink and swore *he'd* like to teach you how to love! And then I caught him in the belly with my knife—he'll never say such words again!

EGYPT—You dirty, murdering beast you! I'll call my husband—he'll get the servant and hold you till the dogs have come!—*(She turns toward Nick's door.)*

FARO—*(Jeering)*—That's right—go call him, sweetheart! Tell him you're ready for the wedding bed—and when he's closed that door, stand back and watch me kill him!

EGYPT—*(Beating her hands together in an agony of invocation)*—God! Come down—come down! Ride down on the storm and suck the black blood from his rotten heart.—*(She throws herself on the couch in an agony of tears.)*

FARO—*(At the window)*—The wind's gone. The rain's over. God shuts his ears to women on their wedding-nights!—*(He turns, sees her attitude of despair, and a sudden wave of tenderness sweeps over him. At first he stands above her, then raises her, and at last gently holds her in his arms. During this scene the storm ceases wholly.*

*The moonlight is seen outside and gradually filters into the room, filling it with an unearthly radiance.)*

FARO—*(Gently)*—Little sweethear—stop crying.

EGYPT—*(Sobbing)*—Go away!

FARO—*(Touching her)* — There—there! — *(She shrinks at his touch—crying again)*—Come, there's no use crying! It's late—it's time to go.

EGYPT—*(Sobbing)*—Never—never.

FARO—*(Tenderly)*—Little blossom of fire, you must!

EGYPT—never until your horses drag me behind you!

FARO—*(Calmly)*—You're coming with me. Shall I tell you why? Because—way down in your heart, you *want* to come——

EGYPT—No—!

FARO—You *need* to come, you're sick for the open air—you're tired of bruising your wings against this cage of brick and stone—my eagle—my own wild eagle—d'you think I'd want you if you'd forgotten how to fly?

EGYPT—I have! I have! It's all gone. Those years are dead and buried—like an awful dream!

FARO—*(Smiling as he bends over her)*—Sweetheart, you lie. You've always remembered. In the fine houses here, eating and drinking and spending your money, the longing for the road has seized you in the throat like a sudden pain! Sometimes, in your singing and your laughing you've choked when you thought of the wheatfields out there—under the stars!

EGYPT—*(Sternly)*—I never—remembered!

FARO—Not even the gray light before dawn when you boiled me coffee and watched the slow red blossom in the east? And we scattered the fires and hitched the horses and were singing on our way before the sun could melt the white frost on the grass?

EGYPT—*(Motionless)*—I have forgotten it all.

FARO—The rattle of the wagon wheels over the long, dusty miles? The thorns on the blackberry bushes, that pricked your fingers as you filled my hat? The hot, still hour in the middle of the day, when the only sounds were the locusts in the long grass, and the only moving thing, the shadows of the clouds upon the hills?

EGYPT—*(As in a dream)*—It seems so long ago—there's so much between us now—all the glories of the world.

FARO—All the glories of the world!—*(Slight pause)*—And through them far away, do you never hear me

whistling the old song—do you never see me mending a saucepan by the side of an empty road?

EGYPT—Sometimes—when I'm all alone——

FARO—On warm, still days, when the leaves are drifting down through yellow sunlight, and the blue smoke hangs upon the air——

EGYPT—*(Whispering)*—Oh, Faro! Do you remember how——

FARO—*(Interrupting)*—How I built up the fire on clear, cold nights and you sat with my head in your lap and told me stories—old tales of passion and of death? And how, in the middle of your dreams, you woke and smiled up at your friends the stars—and turned and slept again——

EGYPT—*(Suddenly covering her ears)*—Stop it!

FARO—*(Triumphantly)*—You remember and love it still!

EGYPT—*(Collecting herself with a semblance of conventionality)*—Of course I remember. But I don't love it—it just bores me to think of it, that's all.

FARO—Bores—? What word is that?

EGYPT—*(Breathing quickly)*—What's the use of explaining things to you? I've learned that a motor-car is much—more attractive than a—a gaudy old wagon with the paint coming off and no springs! And the linen sheets are far more comfortable than—horse blankets! Why, to anyone accustomed—as I am now—to a lady—I mean—I—*(Breaking out in uncontrollable emotion)*—Go away! Why did you ever come back? I won't listen to another word—I—*(There is a knock at the door—right. She stops with her mouth open.)*

NICK'S VOICE—*(Tactfully)*—Blanche?

EGYPT—*(Answering)*—Yes, Nick—wait—wait just a little while—I—I'm saying my prayers!

NICK'S VOICE—Of course, dear.

EGYPT—*(Turning to Faro, in a whisper)*—Did you hear that? Now will you go?

FARO—*(At the window)*—Come here!

EGYPT—I won't!

FARO—I said, come here!—*(She slowly obeys. They are bathed in moonlight.)*

EGYPT—*(Faintly)*—O-oh! It's the full moonlight to-night! I'm afraid—!

FARO—The bride is always afraid on her wedding night.

EGYPT—*(More faintly)*—No——

FARO—You're coming with me. Shall I tell you why? You love me.

EGYPT—*(In a low, passionate tone)*—I hate you—I hate everything about you—every tiny, little thing! I hate the way you walk without making any sound—I hate the look of your body—I hate the hair on your arms, like some filthy animal! I hate the shape of your hands—no, don't touch me! I hate your thick neck and your red lips and your dog's teeth and your grin—I hate your eyes—they're yellow—just like a wolf's—*(Slight pause)*—Stop it! Stop looking at me that way! I won't have it! Stop it—stop it, I say!

FARO—*(Between his teeth)*—You love me——!

EGYPT—Don't you dare say that! It's a lie—why, I've done everything I could to rip you out of my life! I've dipped birchwood into running water, when the starlight was pale upon the snow! I've skinned a bat in the dead of night and boiled it five times in the blood of a lamb—I've said terrible words—charms that must never be told—I've done them all—every one of them—things that make me sick when I remember——

FARO—*(Interrupting triumphantly)*—But they did no good—the pain's still there, strangling your soul—I see it in your bitten lips—in every twisting of your hands—*(In an outburst, putting his arms about her)*—You can say you've forgotten all the rest—but I know—I know you can never forget *me!*

EGYPT—*(Piteously)*—Don't—please go away—please let me alone—please—*oh, please*——

FARO—*(Drawing her to the window)*—Come here, little sweetheart, and look out into the big world. Look at the stars, shining up there as they always have and they always will. They look like eyes, full of tears that never fall. I think they'd talk to us to-night—if they only could—and, oh! I know so well what they'd say!

EGYPT—*(Faintly)*—Faro, let me go——

FARO—*(Softly as he points)*—Look at the Romany blacksmith, up there in the moon! He's hammering away at his golden forge and smiling at us from behind the linden-tree—see. He's turning all the lily-pads into big silver dollars. Little sweetheart! Do you know why he shines so big and bright to-night?—*(Very softly)*—*I* know why!—*(He presses her to him instinctively.)*—Hark—! It's a wild cat crying for his love—there where the mountains

are black against the sky! Did you hear that whip-poor-will—down in the swamp? Listen—! There he is again. And the glow-worms in the garden, the mist and the moonlight! The tree toads croaking—do you hear them? Oh, little sweetheart, just be still and listen to the world!—*(He has his arm about her.)*

EGYPT—*(Dreamily, her head on his shoulder)*—It's all singing and shining—the whole night's living and breathing and whispering beautiful things—I wonder—Oh, I wonder what it means!

FARO—*(Inarticulately)*—This—*(He kisses her for a brief, passionate moment.)*

EGYPT—*(Drawing away her head)*—Oh, God—Oh—God—!

FARO—Open your ears, little sweetheart, and you'll hear the stars say, "We once were young—we know—we know." You'll hear the winds of the world, carrying just two messages—and one's "I'm waiting!"—and one's "I'm coming!" Open your eyes, little sweetheart—you'll see the moon is shining just to guide us as we wander to each other's arms——

EGYPT—*(Tearing herself away from him and leaving window)*—Faro—be good to me—go away—don't—don't talk to me any more!

FARO—*(Following her)*—So you're coming with me—out of this black hole and all its dead things—out there into the living night——

EGYPT—*(Struggling)*—No, I'm not!

FARO—*(Continuing)*—And listen, little sweetheart! I know a place where the brook widens out into the deep, black pool. There's where we'll dive and swim together—you and I—and wash off every gorgio memory that sticks to your beautiful brown body—there's where we'll find love, floating like a red flower upon the water—and I'll break it against your mouth and a smell like the smell of a million blossoming grapes will turn your blood to ice and fire, and then I'll build you the bed of moon-flowers in a jasmine thicket under the pines—and, oh! your soul will melt like wax in the heart of it—*(In a paroxysm of passion)*—Little rawnie—little darling—I've waited—I've starved for four whole years—*four years!* Oh, God, for all my life—and now—our wedding night—*it's here—!*

*(He seizes her in his arms and kisses her. A long, almost terrible embrace. The door at right opens and Nick appears in his dressing gown and slippers. He stands for*

*a moment and then turns on the lights. Faro and Egypt do not move.)*

NICK—*(At last)—Blanche—!*

FARO—*(Raising his head)*—She's mine now, d'you hear? She's mine! You bought her from me on our wedding day—you'd have kept her forever, and clipped her and tamed her and bled her—I know that! But you've lost her now! I've got her and I'll never let her go!

NICK—*(Again)—Blanche!*

EGYPT—*(Turning to him)*—It's true, Nick—you can't stop me! I'm a river—he's my sea! It was all a mistake—we did our best and no one's to blame, but now—*(Turning again to Faro)*—Oh, God! I'll sleep with you on the ground to-night and wake with the morning in my eyes!—*(She throws her arms about his neck.)*

FARO—*(Triumphantly)*—She loves me—Egypt loves me! What do I care now for your guns and dogs, there's not a jail that's strong enough to hold me, there's not a bullet hard enough to kill me—die!—?—*(With a laugh)*—I'm going to live forever!—*(He kisses her in ecstacy. Meanwhile Nick cooly goes about locking the doors and taking the keys.)*

EGYPT—*(Turning to the window)*—Big world out there! Sun and moon and all the sky! I'm coming—d'you hear? I'm coming back to you now—and, oh! I'll never leave you any more!

FARO—*(Tenderly)*—D'you smell the moon flowers blossoming in the pines?

EGYPT—*(Whispering)*—I see the fireflies—and a shooting star! I hear a wind that's singing far away!

FARO—A thousand voices singing through the night——

EGYPT—*(Hardly breathing)*—My wedding night—Oh, God! My wedding night!—*(They are at the window, paying no attention to Nick until he steps forward and blocks their way.)*

NICK—*(Cooly)*—Stop, Blanche!

EGYPT—No——!

NICK—My dear, it's for your sake—not mine!

FARO—Get out of the way—we have no time for talking!

NICK—I don't want to talk after I've said one thing. —*(Very sternly)*—I'll give you until I count ten to drop my wife and climb out that window, and if you're not gone then, I'll——

FARO—Well—what'll you do?

NICK—*(Cooly producing his revolver)*—I'll empty all six chambers into your head, so help me God!

EGYPT—Faro—his pistol——!

FARO—*(Bullying)*—Move along there!

NICK—*(Counting)*—One—two—three——

FARO—You'd better look out! I've killed one man to-day!

NICK—Four—five—six—seven——

FARO—*(Between his teeth)*—All right—come, you—*(He suddenly drops Egypt and springs at Nick like a cat, knocking up his hand. The pistol goes off—and the two men are seen struggling frantically all over the room. Egypt follows them, terrified. A pause, during which they fight.)*

NICK—*(Panting, as Faro tries to seize his throat)*—Let go there, damn you—*(Another pause.)*

FARO—*(As Nick fails to trip him)*—Oh, you would, would you—not *that* time!—*(It is seen that Faro is gradually subduing Nick.)*

EGYPT—*(Suddenly)*—You've got him, Faro—oh, be careful of your arm!—*(Nick falls with Faro on him)*—Don't kill him, please—he's been very good to me!

FARO—*(To Egypt)*—Shut up!—*(Drawing his knife as he kneels on Nick)*—D'you see that, gorgio thief? I'm going to cut your head off now and nothing anyone can say will stop me.—*(He grins and wipes the knife on his sleeve, breathing heavily.)*

EGYPT—Faro, don't—don't do it, just to please me! I——*(Suddenly)*—Hark! What's that?—*(She runs to the window, looks out. Then with a cry)*—The dogs—They've got us!

*(As she speaks the whole posse is heard sweeping round the corner of the house. Yelping of dogs, men's voices, horses' hoofs, cracks of whip, etc. The red light of the torches flickers on the ceiling of the room. The following voices are heard speaking almost together.)*

SHERIFF—*(From below)*—They 'ah headed ovah heah!

ANOTHER—He's up a tree——!

ANOTHER—Jim! Oh, Jim! Gimme that lantern!

ANOTHER—Theah's a light in that window!

SHERIFF—*(Calling up)*—Who's theah? Hello! Whose window is that?

*(Faro, who has paused to listen with knife in hand,*

*drops it to the floor, leaps to his feet and runs like a trapped animal to the door, which he discovers to be locked.)*

FARO—It's locked—*(He beats at it unavailingly with his hands; then runs to the door—right. Same business.)*

SHERIFF — *(Below)* — That you, Mr. Van Kleet? Sorry if we——

*(Egypt, who has slipped on a long, embroidered robe lying over foot of bed, now appears at the window, illumined by the glare of torches from below.)*

EGYPT — *(Calling down)* — My husband's asleep. What is it you want?

SHERIFF—*(Below)*—That fellah we'ah aftar—we've tracked him right up heah. You ain't hea'd or seen him, have you?

EGYPT—No. I think you've made a mistake. I've been looking out this window all evening and I haven't heard or seen a thing.

SHERIFF—*(Below)*—That's funny—they'ah footprints all across the lawn. An' the dawgs are tryin' to climb right up the side o' the house! Down, suh, down! —*(Crack of whip. Renewed yelps.)*

EGYPT—*(Terrified)*—But there's no one here—I'm sure of that! There *can't* be!

*(Meanwhile Faro, after hurling himself in vain against each door, rushes at Nick, who has with difficulty risen.)*

FARO—*(Muttering)*—The key—where's the key! You give me that key—*(But before he can reach him, Nick has gained the window and is calling down to the men below. Faro has to stop short for fear of being seen.)*

NICK—*(Calling)*—Oh, Woodward, is that you?

SHERIFF—Yes, suh. Sorry to——

NICK—*(Interrupting)*—Wait just a minute. You're looking for a gypsy. Well, he's——

EGYPT—*(Seizing him)*—Nick—don't tell them—don't for God's sake!

NICK—*(To her)*—Why not?—*(Calling down)*—That gypsy——

EGYPT—*(Desperately, speaking in a low quick voice)*—No, wait until you've heard me—Nick, you've got to wait! You must do something for me now—you must do it quick—you must help him to get away—*(Before he can interrupt)*—S-sh! Don't say a word until I've finished —I'll never forget that——

NICK—*(Interrupting harshly)*—You love him!

EGYPT—*(Always holding him, always desperately)*—Yes, I love him—that's it, Nick. I love him—I'm sorry I love him, but I can't help it——

NICK—Then why in God's name are you asking me to help him?—*(Calling down)*—Woodward—I——

SHERIFF—*(Below)*—Yes, suh. Have you seen him?

EGYPT—*(Before Nick can answer)*—If you let him get away this once, I won't go with him, Nick—I'll stay here all my life, I'll make you as good a wife as I possibly can—I'll do my best—you'll never be sorry—you'll never regret it——

NICK—And if I don't?

EGYPT—If you don't and they get him—why, I'll kill myself the day he's hanged—that's all.

SHERIFF—*(Below)*—Have you seen him, suh? Can't you tell us quick?—*(There is a murmur from the other men at the delay. Faro is prowling about, making inarticulate animal sounds.)*

NICK—You won't run after him?

EGYPT—I won't run after him.

NICK—You'll stay with me?

EGYPT—I'll stay here with you.

NICK—For the rest of your life?

EGYPT—Yes, for the rest of my life!—*(Slight pause.)*

NICK—*(Harshly)*—You're lying. You're going to fool me!

EGYPT—*(In shrill agony)*—No, I'm not—I swear it—*I swear it*——

NICK—How do I know?

EGYPT—*(Raising her eyes and holding up her hands)*—May the good God damn me forever if I break my word!—*(Slight pause.)*

NICK—All right. I'll do it!

EGYPT—*(Breaking down)*—God bless you — oh, God bless you—*(She tries to kiss his hands.)*

NICK—*(Calling)*—He's here. He climbed the big vine and broke in through my window about half an hour ago. I've managed to keep him, and now he's going to hand himself over quietly. Please send off all the dogs. I'm going down to let you in.—*To Egypt, turning from the window)*—As soon as they're in the house, tell him to jump out there and make a dash for Sand River and the Graniteville Road. It's the only chance he's got!—*(He goes to door—left—and unlocks it)*—Remember, you're

your father's daughter, Blanche—and I trust you.—*(He goes out. She rushes to the door and locks it again.)*

FARO—*(Picking up his knife from where he had dropped it)*—Has he gone to get 'em! They'll never catch me alive—I'll fight until they——

EGYPT—*(At the window, motioning him back)*—Wait—He's coming—there! He's talking to the Sheriff—*(There is a confused sound of voices from below)*—They're taking off the dogs—no wait! Get back, they'll see you—I'll tell you when——*(The lights, voices, dogs, etc., die away suddenly as they came)*—They're all inside—they're on the stairs—now jump, Faro—and good-bye!

FARO—*(At the window)*—Good-bye? You're coming too.

EGYPT—*(Drawing back)*—No—no!

FARO—You love me?

EGYPT—I've sworn an oath——

FARO—Oh, damn your oath!

EGYPT—If you don't go quick, they'll catch you—they'll lock you in the jail—you'll never see the sun again—you'll never feel a horse between your knees——

FARO—*(Listening at the door)*—Stop—I can't hear.

EGYPT—*(With dilated eyes)*—They'll tie a rope around your neck and hang you—you'll choke and dance and grin there till you——

FARO—*(Interrupting)*—They're coming this way.

EGYPT—*(Hysterically)*—They'll bury you in quicklime—you'll rot there till the Judgment Day—oh, go, *go*—before it's all too late.

FARO—*(Resolutely)*—I won't go without you.

EGYPT—*(Looking up)*—God, why don't you help me?

FARO—Come with me, little wife——

EGYPT—*(With sudden wild gesture)*—If you don't, I won't believe there *is* a God.

FARO—*(His arm about her)*—You love me, little sweetheart—come!

EGYPT—*(Drawing away)*—I can't—here take your dime—*(She removes it from her neck and gives it to him)*—and give it to another chi—she'll cook your food and mend your clothes, she'll teach my children how to call her "Mother," she'll make you happy, Faro, you'll forget me when she puts her first son in your arms——

FARO—Egypt—*(With abandon)*—And so good luck to you! Good-bye—*good-bye!*

*(She throws her arms about his neck. A long kiss. There is the rush of heavy feet outside at left, voices, etc. The knob of the door is turned and found locked. There is a violent knocking.)*

ANOTHER VOICE—Break it in!

ANOTHER—Get yo' shouldah theah!

ANOTHER—All togethah—now!—*(They attack the door. Faro flings Egypt to the ground and rushes to the window.)*

EGYPT—Wait——

FARO—*(Outside the window with a cry of hope)*—Egypt——!

EGYPT—*(Beside herself)*—I'm coming, Faro—I'm a gypsy, and damn it! *I don't care!*

*(She slips off her robe and, rushing to the window, flings herself into Faro's arms. They disappear together, just as the door gives way. Nick, the Sheriff and all his posse burst into the empty room, as the curtain falls.)*

# Act 4

SCENE.

Six years later.

The road. At extreme right—next to footlights is a big elm. It's branches fram the scene on that side of stage. From behind this elm, at right, comes the dusty, yellow road. It turns sharply towards right again at the centre of the stage and is lost to view behind a hedge of hazel-nut bushes. Then it is seen again, a little beyond, until it disappears over the crest of a low hill. Still further, on the other side of the valley, it appears once more and—like a narrow white ribbon—goes over the top of the distant hills.

To left-back is a field dotted with newly made corn-stalks. A wooden fence separates it from the road, and a gate faces the audience—left-centre. Behind the hazel-bushes, on the opposite side of the road from this field, is another, in which the fall wheat has not yet been cut. At left-front is the roadside, covered with grass and golden-rod, shelving down a little, as though the foot-lights were the ditch. It is late summer. There is a slight haze in the air. The eastern sky is pale and beautiful in the after-glow of the setting sun. To right-centre—in the road, and facing towards right—is a big touring-car, a little dusty, but very elaborate. It has evidently just broken down. Nick is sitting in the tonneau. He looks much older than in the preceding acts; he wears a motoring coat and cap and gloves. The chauffeur is outside, examining the machinery of the car.

NICK—*(Looking down at the chauffeur)*—What's the matter, Davis?

CHAUFFEUR—*(Still examining)*—Something wrong with the connection, sir. A short-circuit, I *think*, but I'm not quite sure.

NICK—How long will it take to repair?

CHAUFFEUR—About ten minutes, sir, if I had another man to crank while I worked.

NICK—*(Getting out)*—I suppose I can do that!

CHAUFFEUR—*(Embarrassed)*—Oh, sir, I couldn't ask *you!* It's apt to strain the shoulder!

NICK—*(Annoyed)*—Well, it's got to be done, and there's not a farm-house within a mile. So I—*(He stops to*

*listen, as the sound of a man's voice is heard singing on the road at right, growing nearer)*—What's that?

CHAUFFEUR—*(Running towards right and looking off)*—It's some fellow in a cart, sir. I'll get *him!*

NICK—*(Lighting a cigarette)*—All right, but hurry it up—I've got to be in town by eight. I have a dinner engagement.

CHAUFFEUR—Very good, sir. He's just here.—*(The cart slowly appears. It is old and dilapidated—once gaily painted, but now shabby, it is drawn by a well-cared-for little horse. The back of it is filled with bundles, pots and pans, etc. The front and only seat is occupied by Faro, driving, his little son, and Egypt, holding a baby in her lap done up in an old shawl. Faro has grown stouter and more commonplace. He is dressed with less of an eye for effect. The little boy has a brown face and is very serious and quiet. Egypt is less picturesque than in Act I—Older, wearier, and gentler. The Chauffeur calling rather promptorily)*—Wait there!—*(Faro drives stolidly on towards the bend of the road. Running after him)*—Stop, my man! Don't you hear me calling you?—*(Faro halts his horse and turns over his shoulder to look at the chauffeur. Egypt neither turns nor seems to hear. Coming up beside the cart)*—Do you want to earn a quarter?

FARO—Yes, your honor.

CHAUFFEUR—Well, then—come and crank this car for fifteen minutes. You know how to crank, don't you?

FARO—Your honor, I can learn.

CHAUFFEUR—*(Irritably)*—Then get a move on! The gentleman's in a hurry for his dinner.

FARO—*(To his little son)*—Here, you take the reins! Look sharp now and don't you dare let go!—*(The little boy silently obeys him. Faro jumps down, hitches up his ragged trousers, rubs his hands, and turns to the chauffeur)*—Ready, your honor.

CHAUFFEUR—*(Going towards the car)*—Come along, then.—*(Faro follows him. They go to the machine, where the chauffeur is seen to direct Faro. The latter begins cranking the car. They both work during the following scene.)*

*(Meanwhile Egypt has occupied herself contentedly enough with her baby. She is humming to it the same little lullaby she sang in Act I.)*

EGYPT—*(Crooning and singing)*—My Egypt sleeps

—she falls asleep—my little dear—my girl will sleep—she'll sleep—sleep——

*(During the dialogue between Faro and the chauffeur, Nick has stared at Egypt. Now he comes slowly to the cart, tosses away his cigarette, takes off his hat, and speaks to her very politely.)*

NICK—*(Gravely)*—I beg your pardon.

EGYPT—*(Not recognizing him)*—Yes, your honor!

NICK—Can you tell my fortune?

EGYPT—*(Simply)*—Indeed I can, your honor, I

*(She stops suddenly and looks at him. There is a silence. As they wait thus, motionless, the chauffeur's voice is heard from across the road.)*

CHAUFFEUR—*(To Faro)*—Well, go on—what are you waiting for?—*(Faro, bending in front of the car, mutters something unintelligible)*—All right—now we'll try her once more!

NICK—*(Moving and speaking)*—May I help you?

EGYPT—*(Faintly)*—Thank you—I—*(She carefully puts down the baby, then turns and jumps down herself easily.)*

NICK—Suppose we sit down here by the side of the road?—*(He selects a place)*—Then we can watch the sunset while we talk. Wait—I'll just take away that thistle!—*(He breaks it off and tosses it to one side)*—There you are!—*(She sits down silently and nervously. Nick seating himself rather awkwardly beside her, with a sudden intake of breath.)*—A-ah! My rheumatism again! It catches me now whenever I—*(He stops.)*

EGYPT—*(Shyly)*—I'm sorry.

NICK—Thanks.—*(The western glow falls upon their faces)*—Well, there's my palm!—*(He gives her his outstretched hand. She takes it, but looks into his face. There is a pause.)*—What's the matter? Aren't you going to read it?—*(She looks down at his hand.)*

EGYPT—*(Timidly and awkwardly)*—A long life, your honor—and many journeys—those are in the wrinkles of your thumb—and—and—*(Breaking off)*—I can't see. The night's falling. It's getting dark.

NICK—*(Bending towards her)*—Won't you tell me something more, try!

EGYPT—*(Looking him in the eyes)*—You're a good man—kind to poor people, like us gypsies—and—you—*(She stops, unable to go on.)*

NICK—*(Encouragingly)*—That's right! Tell me all you know!

EGYPT—You were born lucky—with a gold piece in your mouth, we gypsies call it. God gave you everything he could—health and wealth and mind and heart and soul. You started on your way when the sun was shining, and it's led you through the corn-fields and the meadows of tall hay. All the flowers blossomed beside it—you only had to bend and pick them as you walked along. And the wind blew and sometimes you could catch a glimpse of mountains and the sea beyond. Your honor, it's an easy road you've followed—a beautiful, easy road!

NICK—*(Lightly)*—And where will it take me, Egyptian sorceress?

EGYPT—*(Slowly)*—Wherever you meant to go.—*(Pause.)*

NICK—I wish I'd known that when I started.

EGYPT—*(Eagerly)*—Your honor, it's not too late! It never is too late!

NICK—Perhaps not—but I'm getting rather tired.—*(Suddenly)*—Why—something dropped on my hand! You're—you're not *crying*, are you?

EGYPT—It—it was only a drop of dew from the heavens above us——

NICK—*(Putting his hand on her shoulder)*—Blanche—Blanche, don't cry!

EGYPT—*(After a pause)*—So your honor remembers after the long years.

NICK—Yes, I remember. And if—if you ever want to come back, you know—well, your room's ready, and your father's waiting.

EGYPT—Tell him, your honor, he is waiting for the dead to rise and walk again.

NICK—*(After a slight pause)*—What d'you mean?

EGYPT—One day, before my boy up there was born, my husband beat me—he'd been drinking in the town——

NICK—*(Quickly)*—Well?

EGYPT—And so I thought I'd go back to my father's house and see if they'd let me in—and I did up some things in a big bandanna and put on my best shoes—then gran-bebee stopped me and told me I must stay

NICK—Why?

EGYPT—*(With a sort of joy)*—She said that every drop of red blood in my body sang a Romany song! She said that if I lived a thousand years I'd die at last by the

side of a road! She said my father was a gypsy horse-thief, hanged in Tennessee!—*(Pause.)*

NICK—*(With difficulty)*—And—Lindsey—?

EGYPT—*(Sadly)*—His child was dead—the old chief sold me in her place.—*(Lifting her head)*—And now the truth has broken from its grave!

NICK—*(Slowly)*—So you *were* Egypt—after all.

EGYPT—Don't you believe it now?

NICK—Yes. I think somewhere—way down—I always believed it. And *that,* my dear, is why I loved you so. —*(The baby cries in the cart.)*

EGYPT—*(Quickly)*—There's my smallest — *(Half-whispering, half calling)*—S-sh! be quiet now—I tell you! —*(The baby cries again—With shy, triumphant pride)*—Listen to the voice of her! And she only three months old!

NICK—*(Smiling)*—Wonderful!

EGYPT—Would—would your honor like to see her?

NICK—Indeed I should—though I'm not much good with babies.

EGYPT—*(Importantly)*—Wait!—*(She goes to the cart and gathers up the baby in the shawl. Holding the child and showing it to him.)*—Look there—just look at her!

NICK—*(Bending over, awkwardly)*—Yes—yes—very nice indeed. Er—what's its name?

EGYPT—*(Smiling)*—Egypt. It was my husband who called her that!

NICK—Funny little things!—*(He pokes at it, gently, with one finger)*—By Jove, it—it really looks like you!

EGYPT—*(Proudly)*—*I* think she has her father's eyes!

NICK—*(To the baby)*—Little sphinx!—*(Looking up)* —Are these two all you've got?

EGYPT—Oh, no—no, I—*(Suddenly)*—Look! She's smiling at you!—*(Resuming)*—I have three more, with gran-bebee at the camp. There's Lancelot—he's four in October—and Jasper, he's three—and little Nick——

NICK—*(Interrupting)*—What?

EGYPT—*(Timidly)*—Little Nick. You don't mind, sir, do you? He's only two last month and talking like a magpie!

NICK—No, I don't mind——

EGYPT—My three small men! I'll see them to-night if we have good luck on the road!

NICK—*(Pointing to the boy in the cart)*—And—that young fellow up there on the box—he's your eldest?

EGYPT—Yes, your honor—*(She calls to him)*—Come here, little Faro, and speak to the gorgio gentleman!

LITTLE FARO—*(Solemnly)*—No—I must hold the reins. My dad told me not to let them go.

EGYPT—*(Apologetic)*—I'd forgotten. He must learn to obey.—*(To the baby in her arms)*—There—what do you want, fat Robin?—*(Glancing shyly at Nick)*—I—I think she's hungry!

NICK—*(Looking towards the cart nervously)*—Can't I—er, get her something?

EGYPT—*(Simply)*—No—I'll nurse her a bit, your honor, and then she'll go to sleep.—*(She sits down and holds the baby to her breast. Nick looks at her for a moment, then takes off his cap.)*

NICK—You look—so happy.

EGYPT—*(With a little sigh)*—Happy, your honor? I don't know. But the years teach us there's something better than being happy—and I've got that!

NICK—*(Smiling)*—And you never miss the palace with a hundred rooms that I was going to give you?

EGYPT—*(With a large gesture)*—It's out there, your honor—everywhere! The fields and the road and the evening star!

NICK—And the rubies—what were they? Big—and red as wine and fire.

EGYPT—*(Simply)*—He buys me such pretty beads sometimes—at the fair.

NICK—And in these trees—do you hear the singing of the birds of Paradise?

EGYPT—*(Softly)*—Oh, yes—I think I hear them every time my children call me!—*(A little pause. Then turning to him shyly)*—But I've talked so much—and you—you haven't said a word. If you are married, can I ask about your lady—and the young ones?

NICK—*(With a shrug)*—I'm not married.

EGYPT—*(Disappointed)*—I'm sorry.

NICK—*(Carelessly)*—Oh, I manage to get along! New York in the winter, and then California or Palm Beach or the yacht. I went to South America last year. And Europe in the early summer and—then back to Newport for the tennis. Things like that. I try to keep from boring myself—but there's not so very much to do—after all.

EGYPT—*(After a little pause)*—Your honor, you

know so much and I know so little. But even a gypsy—if she's getting along and her youth is over and her children have come—even a gypsy learns a few things before she dies. I've been foolish in my time and I'm not wise now, but what I feel, I can't help just saying out—and I beg your honor's pardon with all my heart.

NICK—Go on—I want to hear.

EGYPT—*(Pointing)*—Look at that fine elm tree—and the fields of corn—and even this little milkweed here, beside us.—*(She picks it up as she speaks)*—Look at everything—big or small—that grows upon the earth. They all come, and they all do what God told them to, and when it's done—they go away. Elm tree or milkweed—somehow it's just the same!

NICK—I know.

EGYPT—*(Wistfully)*—People are like that, don't you think? Some have everything—yes, all the glories of the world! And some have nothing but ragged clothes and tired feet and the sun shining in their eyes as they tramp along But I don't think it matters how much God gave or the devil took—nothing matters if we do our best, as we were born to do, and live hard every minute of the long, long day—and love the road we travel—till we die.

NICK—*(His head bowed)*—I know—I know.

EGYPT—*(Looking far away)*—You see—we have such a little time to be young and old, and glad and sorry—just a little time and then it's all gone and we're blown like that—*(She blows the milkweed)*—out into the night again. Our children stay behind to love and hate and work—wandering up and down the roads of the world—begging and singing and fighting their way from door to door, and field to field, and land to land. Then *their* time comes and *they* die, too—they and their children's children.—*(An instant's pause)*—But life stays! Life never dies! And in a thousand years the moon will rise up from the east, just as it's rising now—and we won't be here—but, oh! we've lived deep once—I don't think we'll care!—*(As she has spoken, the big, gold moon has begun to peer over the top of the farthest hill, just where the distant road has climbed.)*

CHAUFFEUR—*(Coming up and touching his cap)*—I've fixed her, sir. We're ready to go on.

NICK—*(To Chauffeur)*—I see—very well—how much do I owe this man?

CHAUFFEUR—That's all right, sir—I've paid him.

NICK—*(To Faro, who stands before him, hat in hand)*—Here's something for your—bother—and all that—*(He hastily gives him a bill.)*

FARO—*(Taking it eagerly)*—Thanks, your honor—thank you very much—your honor must know what it's like to be poor and——

EGYPT—*(Interrupting impulsively)*—No, Faro—give it back—I can't let him——

FARO—*(In blank amazement)*—*Give it back!*

NICK—*(To her)*—Why—is anything the matter?—*(A slight pause.)*

EGYPT—*(Humbly)*—No, your honor—nothing—nothing at all.

NICK—*(To Faro)*—Don't spend it on drink. Get a present for your wife.—*(Looking at him oddly)*—I suppose, after all, you're the right sort—well, good-bye.

FARO—Good-bye, sir—*(To Egypt)*—Here—pipe up and thank his honor for what he's done or I'll break your jaw!

EGYPT—*(To Nick)*—God bless you, sir—God bless you, and bring you safe to your journey's end.

NICK—*(Gently)*—Thank you, my dear—for everything you've told me, and now——

CHAUFFEUR—*(Interrupting and touching his cap)*—Beg pardon, sir—are we starting?

NICK—Yes.

CHAUFFEUR—Very good, sir.

*(He touches his cap again, goes to the car, cranks her up, and gets into his place. Nick turns again to Egypt, as if about to speak. She makes two embarrassed little curtsies. He pauses a moment, then goes to the motor and gets in.)*

NICK—*(To Chauffeur)*—Go on.—*(The man pulls the lever, the machine starts, and the car disappears behind the big elm tree at right. Egypt stands motionless, looking after it.)*

FARO—*(Slapping his thigh in high good humor)*—Ten dollars—*ten dollars!* And a minute ago I didn't have the price of a glass of beer! Good Lord—it's a rum world!

EGYPT—*(Still looking down the road)*—Yes— it's a rum world.

FARO—*(Jumping up into the cart)*—Give me the reins, son—we're late!

LITTLE FARO—*(Proudly)*—Dad, I never let go once!

FARO—*(Laughing)*—That's right! You'd have caught it if you had!—*(Turning to where Egypt stands)*—Egypt! What are you looking at? Come along—I want my onion-stew!

EGYPT—*(Turning)*—I'm coming, Faro.

FARO—*(Lifting his whip, ready to start)*—We'll be in camp by nine o'clock! Look!—the big moon's going to light us on our way!—*(To Egypt, who has climbed up beside him)*—All right, little sweetheart?—*(He puts his arms about her.)*

EGYPT—*(Cheerfully, as she puts little Faro between them and settles the baby in her lap)*—All right!

*(Faro cracks his whip, the horse starts, and the cart goes creaking off towards the moon and the distant hills. It soon is lost around the first bend of the road. Faro's voice comes back faint, but good-tempered.)*

FARO—*(Singing)*—

"Oh, I was born when the world began,
When the world ends I shall die——"

*CURTAIN.*

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